

The Sketch



C. HENTSCHEL J.F.

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SIXPENCE.
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MISS GRACE HAWTHORNE AS CHRISTIAN IN "THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS,"
AT THE OLYMPIC THEATRE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MADAME LALLIE GARET-CHARLES, REGENT'S PARK, N.W.

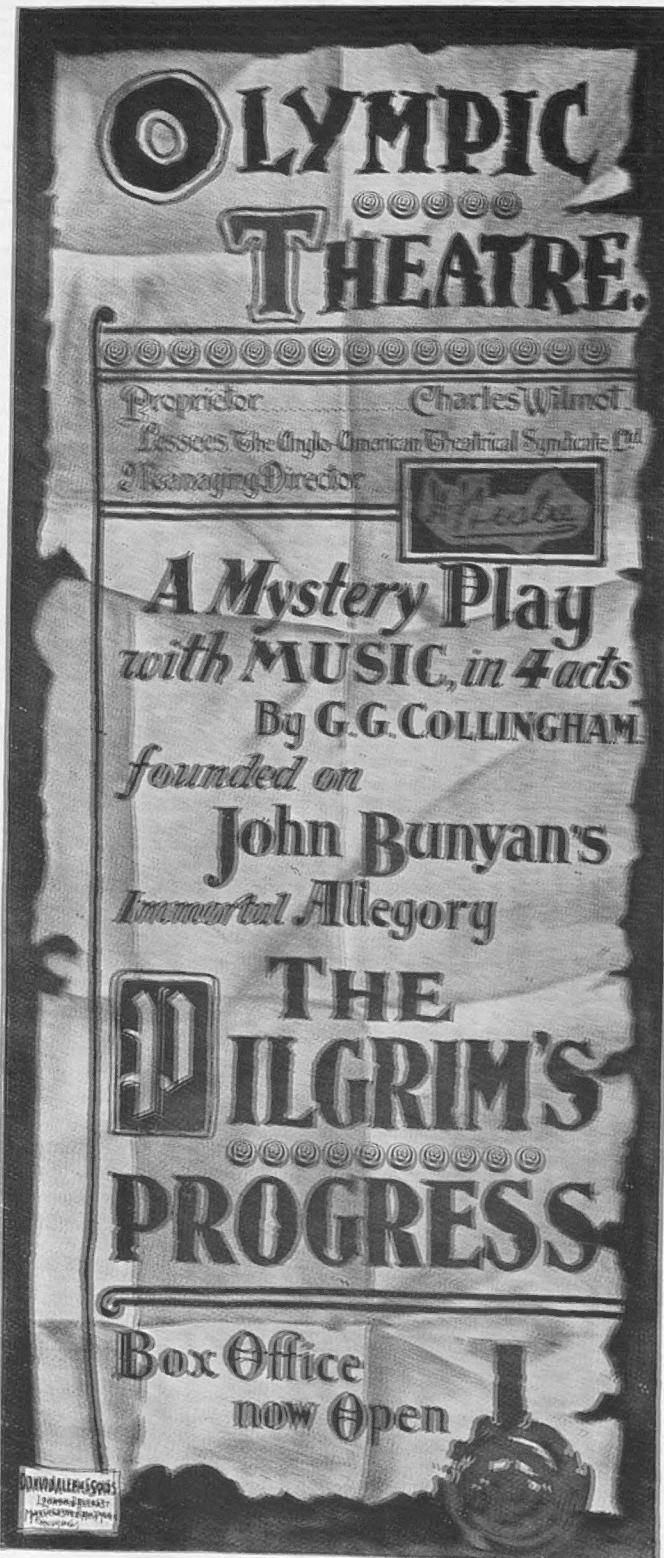
“THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS,” AT THE OLYMPIC.

The announcement of the Olympic entertainment caused me to take up Bunyan's work, which like most people, I have not read since I was a boy. I am sorry that I took it up again, for my old admiration has sadly diminished. On inquiry of my fellow-workers, I find them in the same plight. Indeed, it is difficult to believe that Macaulay's eulogy was quite sincere. Of course, apart from the valuable services it has rendered to Christianity, the book has real merit of invention and construction, and, more still, of style. It is, however, the style that seems disappointing. Treated as the work of a writer, the language shows remarkable genius; judged absolutely, it is excellent, full of vigour, simple, and direct; but it lacks the higher qualities. However, even in the hypercritical it arouses sufficient feeling of admiration to cause a repugnance to the idea of attempting to set it upon the stage.

The law, as all know, prevents anyone to dramatise a novel without its author's consent, leaving it, therefore, to the playwright's honour to do no dirty work, no dangerous pilfering. Most people think that the law should be changed and the novelist protected. One could not, however, expect that protection should be accorded to work no longer copyright, and therefore a Bunyan must lie at the common mercy. But, as it seems to me shameful to adapt the work of a living author without his consent, so to treat the labours of the mighty dead in a fashion which they would have disapproved appears a kind of cowardly treason. Now, the poor, earnest writer of Elstow certainly would have been horrified at the idea of seeing his work converted into a kind of pantomime and enlivened by what to him must have seemed lascivious dances: I did not use the adjective, for they seemed rather poor, unattractive stuff.

It appears impossible to pretend that such a production, which must cause the judicious to groan, can have more spiritual effect than is exercised by an Alhambra ballet or Drury Lane pantomime, unless to be bound to be on the road to reformation. Indeed, I cannot find an excuse for the production by the Anglo-American Theatrical Syndicate, Limited. Perhaps it is foolish to ask a syndicate—even Anglo-American—for anything of noble effort. A syndicate is a corporation, and corporations, we know, have neither bodies to be kicked nor souls to be damned—to quote or misquote from memory. Yet an interesting or very beautiful affair might have been offered, and would have mitigated the wrath of those far once on the side of Bunyan.

Perhaps the show was very interesting and very beautiful, and prejudice has blinded me to its qualities. Yet my eyes were so far open as to notice some points of merit. For instance, the grim effectiveness of Mr. Thomson as Death; the delightful gaiety and coquettishness of Miss Verna Boringer in the part of Flirymonda, and the admirable acting of her sister Esma, the Speranza, who held all eyes and ears during the first two brief moments when she gladdened the stage; the powerful acting of Miss Laura Johnson; the curious, rather impressive, work of Mr. Courtney Thorpe—made up, unfortunately, in a comic style; the clever acting of Miss Elzey; and the splendid costumes of Mr. Abington. The general effect, however, seemed to this “Mr. Prejudice” tedious and foolish. There were some pretty scenes, capital comediquettes and storms—though not manly up to “Candidus” or “A Life of Leisure” standard. Some of the music was pleasing, and there were moments of hearty if loud laughter—for instance, in the burlesque combat that would have delighted Mr. Chumley. Unfortunately, the account on the debit side was too heavy to be balanced by these good points, and the audience refused to be cajoled by Mr. Bassie into giving a favourable verdict.



POSTER OF “THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.”
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“ALADDIN,” AT DRURY LANE.

It is sad to be compelled to abandon the old formula about Sir Augustus Harris surpassing himself. I wonder how many of the huge Boxing Night audience gave a sigh of regret at the irresistible thought that another was reigning where Sir Augustus ruled so long, so ably, and with such pleasure. For I believe that, of all his big schemes, the pantomimes were dearest to him, and, with all respect to Mr. Barrett, it seems fair to bear in mind that the late manager of the National Theatre had no little share in the production of the superb entertainment of

Saturday night—of course, I do not merely refer to the fact that he prepared the scenario.

However, this is rather the season to think of the living than the dead, and it is pleasant to see that the prophecies are fulfilled—that the successor begins where Drury Lane left off last year, and distinct progress is shown, so that “Aladdin” can hold its own against its predecessors, and, in some respects, give points; in others, take them too. I cannot remember any pantomime that has, in the way of beauty, given so much pleasure to my eyes and ears as “Aladdin.” Yet, to take the grumbles first, I am sorry to see the disappearance of the *prima ballerina*. Dancing is so delightful a form of art that it is a pity to close any avenue, and much as we may criticise the tendency of the great schools to indulge in gymnasiums, it remains the great school. Why could we not have Zanfretta, no gymnast, but pure dancer, who already has given great pleasure at the Lyceum? Moreover, the bulletins and processions are too long—this is an old fault. It is easy to understand that, after spending thousands on gorgeous dresses and beautiful scenery, a manager is unwilling to see them pass away in a few minutes. Yet I never met with a human being who did not find them too long. It is possible, alas! to have too much of Wilhelm's dresses and the Ivory and Pearl Palace.

It was a charming idea to give us the Chinese boy and girl playing at Romeo and Juliet in the lovely garden of the Palace. Who can forget handsome Miss Ada Blanche, prince of pantomime “boys,” and the dainty Miss Decima Moore, a coquette in penciline, to murder Menelik's phrase, “crying to one another”? I am quite prepared to throw down my glove to those who pretend that Miss Moore is too small for the stage: she seemed to fill it to me!

Do you want to laugh and grow fat? I do not believe in the growing-fat theory. Then you must see the Widow Twinkles. Her dancing lesson, her game of benefits with Almanaz, her explanation of the week's menu, her airs and graces when posing to the interviewer, her—but I cannot mention all. I should not like to speak of Mr. Dan Leno as subtle or refined; but one expects broad comedy in pantomime, and when it is rich, funny, broad humour like Mr. Dan Leno's, the other performer and delighted an enthusiastic house.

The introduction of Chiquevalli, king of jugglers, as Demon of the Lamp, is a capital idea. I cannot forget little Miss Geraldine Somerset, most delightful Genius, apparently with a touch of the quality involved in the name. The music gives Grieg, Wagner, Mozart, Gounod, Bennett, and many nameless composers, woven cleverly together to a huge successful pot-pourri and greatly helped. I should like to speak of the notable “Lotus” transformation scene, the handkerchief, the jewel Ballet of Mr. FitzRimmon, Mr. Ernest d'Auban—in fact, of dozens of matters; but who can expect space to do justice to all of merit in the four and a-half hours of splendid entertainment that has been provided by Mr. Barrett?

SCHOOLBOY MUMMERS.

The schoolboy as actor is always interesting, and the Christmas season sees him face the footlights to the delight of himself and his family. A capital performance of H. J. Byron's burlesque "Aladdin; or, The Wonderful Scamp," was given by the Highbury House Dramatic Club in the Royal Concert Hall at St. Leonards-on-Sea. The book, smartly written up to date by two Old Boys, Messrs. Skinner and Churher, was found to contain many local and topical allusions, which the audience of eleven hundred people did not fail to appreciate, and the bright music of Mr. R. T. White, Mus. Bac. Oxon., set the mandarins and mandarinesses a-dancing in a style quite Celestial. The performance went through without a hitch, and the prompter's office was a sinecure.

Admirable as usual was the performance of a Gilbert and Sullivan opera. This time it was "The Pirates of Penzance," by the boys of the

"THE SIGN OF THE SPIDER."

Mr. Bertram Mitford prefaces his stirring tale of love, mystery, and adventure, which he calls "The Sign of the Spider" (Methuen), with a quotation from one of his own previous tales of love, mystery, and adventure, "The Gun-Runner": "After all, the more noteworthy epochs in the lives of individuals, are they not even as these in the lives of nations—a chain of events and strange coincidences working for good or ill to those concerned, but oftener for ill?" Is not this pessimistic and magniloquent quotation weighty and over-important for a sensation tale? Stanningham goes out to South Africa in quest of money, in the first place, and adventures after, like many a brave fellow before him. The adventures may be left to take care of themselves; they usually follow the brave, independent Englishmen of the Mitford-novel type. Only, as Stanningham is already married when he leaves England, the advent of



PEKOE (H. THORPE).



SLAVE OF THE LAMP (H. J. BROWN).



EMPEROR OF KE-AL-POORE (E. FRENCH).



THE WIDOW (W. CHURHER) AND ALADDIN.



ALADDIN (H. DAVIES SINGER).



THE VIZIER (J. D. COCKBURN) AND EMPEROR.

"ALADDIN," AT ST. LEONARDS-ON-SEA.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY G. W. BRADSHAW, HASTINGS.

Grocers' Company's Schools at Hackney. In striking contrast to the desolation of the Downs was the scene inside the gymnasium of the school, where Grocers' potential and Grocers' past and present had assembled in overflowing numbers to witness the performance. To judge by the feelings of the audience, as expressed in frequent—too frequent—encores, the opera was a vast success; and really, after making allowance for the Tappertitian-limbs of the bulk of the pirates, the verdict was thoroughly well deserved. The Grocers' boys were certainly well coached, especially the chorus of policemen. The singing was, perhaps, better than the acting. Particularly good all round were Major-General Stanley (H. E. Baggs), the Sergeant of Police (E. R. Minter), the Pirate King (E. S. Rowsell), and Mabel Stanley (F. O. Harriss). The orchestra was most efficiently conducted by Mr. Ernest Newton, M.A. A short concert followed the performance. The boys at the Cowper Street Schools, E.C., gave a capital performance of "Ruddigore" last week.

"sweet sorceress Lilith" introduces a fresh germ of complication and moral struggle. But the best part of the story deals with the material enemies with which Stanningham contends; the tutelary insect of the Ba-geatya, for instance, which is a huge, noisome spider, whose description takes up nearly a whole chapter, and is horrible and loathsome beyond description. "Tentacles, black, wavy as serpents, covered with hair . . . a head as large as that of a man . . . dull goggle eyes"—and all the rest of it! The demon-god of the Ba-geatya! We leave Stanningham and Mr. Mitford's readers to cope with it, promising them that they shall at least "sup full of horrors."

That remarkable young lady Miss Hope Booth, whose fiasco as Little Miss Cuite, at the Royalty, is not likely to be forgotten, was recently announced to pose as a Bacchante at one of the Boston places of amusement.



MISS ADA ST. RUTH, AUTHOR OF "A KEY TO KING SOLOMON'S RICHES,"
PRODUCED AT THE OPERA COMIQUE.
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY HANA, STRAND.

NOTES FROM THE THEATRES.

I can hardly stop my pen from beginning with a "Shiver my timbers!" so deep an impression has the new-old nautical drama made upon me, and, seeing what a tremendous effect the hornpipe had upon the audience, I have been practising steps all day, so that, in the case of my getting into trouble with the B.P., I may come into favour again with a dance. The death of the year is the time for confession, and I must admit that I went to the Adelphi with the idea I should be bored by the lively parts and amused by the serious moments of Jerrold's play. Imagine, then, my pleasure at seeing a piece far fresher and less jejune than most of the melodramas I have seen of late. I am not quite certain that the play had quite the atmosphere—the smell of sea-salt—that I expected; but, at least, it was a deeply moving human drama, which, in its more important scenes, reached a very respectable degree of art. Indeed, during several of the scenes I was very "misty in the top-lights," and not tempted for a moment during the last act to smile at the proceedings of the court-martial. Who knows what may happen? Perhaps "Black-Eyed Susan" may start all our melodramatists on a new tack? Instead of the complex plays, carried on largely by aid of stage machinery and intricate engineering, which may be likened to a modern man-of-war, we may now return to the simple human style of Douglas Jerrold. I sincerely hope this may be the case.

"All that Glitters is not Gold" may be dealt with in a few words. It glitters no longer, and certainly never was gold; indeed, now it is but a curiosity, an example of the way in which domestic drama ought not to be written. The only pleasant result of the revival was that it enabled Miss Vane Featherstone to give an admirable performance as Martha Gibbs. It was touching to see the earnestness with which Mr. Harry Nicholls played the famous dull comic part of Toby Twinkle. Miss Margaret Halstan, an actress new to me, showed some promise.

However, to return to my William and Susan and the hornpipe. Who suspected Mr. William Terriss, if even, like Jerrold and Tee Pee Cooke (Teepee Cooke, to use Leigh Hunt's facetious spelling), he has been a sailor, could have danced with such prodigious energy and skill, yet have given a beautiful performance afterwards of the unhappy sailor tried and condemned to death. It is not fair to suggest that the hornpipe made the success of the piece, for in truth it seemed to hold the house after the first five minutes, but it certainly deserved its success. My only complaint is that we did not have enough of Miss Millward's delightful acting. All that we had was admirable. By way of criticism, not of her, but of the piece, I might suggest that some of William's more recondite metaphors might be put into language within the range of the ordinary landlubber. Mr. Harry Nicholls and Miss Vane Featherstone acted the comic scenes capitally. Mr. Beveridge played cleverly as Doggrass, and Mr. Lablache was very impressive as the Admiral. I fancy that the cruise of "Black-Eyed Susan" will be long and prosperous, and venture to wish it heartily the compliments of the season.

At the Princess's Theatre Christmastide finds the "Two Little Vagabonds" at their old game. The only difference noticeable from a few months ago is that they play their little game better than ever, for they have warmed to the task. They also possess a new mother, a very sweet and gracious lady known to fame as Miss Hilda Spong. She had a difficult task in coming after Miss Geraldine Olliffe, but has done it well.

"Jedbury Junior," originally leased by Mr. Fred Kerr, has now returned to its owner, Mr. W. S. Penley, at the Globe—"Charley's Aunt" having succumbed at last—but it is now so indifferently played that a new-comer might blame the subject-matter. Mr. Reeves-Smith, who replaces the crisp Mr. Kerr, is the one good feature; but he rattles through it at far too great a pace. The silent Mr. Glibb, so admirably played at Terry's, becomes meaningless in the hands of Mr. Lindo. Mr. Beauchamp's Chris senior and Mr. Farquhar's butler simply blot out the present players. There is, however, a certain prettiness about Miss Annie Aumonier's Dora, and Miss Merrick's Nelly Jedbury. The second act is shabbily mounted, which is a pity, for "Jedbury Junior" is a pretty play—too pretty for Penley's four-act version of it.

Another replacement is Miss Peggy Pryde as the slavey in "The Gay Parisienne," *vice* Miss Louie Freear. It is quite a different sort of slavey altogether—the commonplace, vulgar creature of the halls; whereas Miss Freear was droll, and, to many minds, strangely pathetic. Hers was quite a new study, but Peggy's is quite an old friend—hard, unsympathetic. I regret that Miss Ada Reeve should have gone into trousers to sing her pretty plantation-song. A nigger's is not necessarily a knickers song.

Miss Ada Abbey St. Ruth, the plucky young lady who figures both as authoress and actress in the Rhodesian drama "A Key to King Solomon's Riches," at the Opéra Comique, which I hope to notice next week, is already known to fame in the theatrical world, though chiefly on the music-hall stage, in song and dance. This Rhodesian drama represents South African life during the troublous times last year, for Miss St. Ruth evolved all her ideas on the spot, only having returned from the Colony last August. While living at Barberton she witnessed many most exciting scenes. Miss St. Ruth is an Australian, a native of Sydney, but "came home" while still very young, and was educated quietly under a private governess, frequently (to her regret) neglecting her lessons to act or dance. Her first professional engagement was at

the Exhibition of 1887, where her success was so marked that she decided to remain in *the* profession, and was engaged by Mr. George Edwardes for the production of "Ruy Blas."

Then she assisted in a production of "Le Prophète," at Covent Garden, and went on tour with the Sutherland Operatic Company for small parts, after which she decided to strike out in a line of her own, and, turning her back upon the legitimate, joined the Zingarni Troupe, soon becoming one of Mr. Frederick's cleverest singers, dancers, and mandolinists. Later she thought the broader fields of the music-halls would suit her better, at once, in 1891, securing an engagement at the Star, Bristol, and, after remaining there over a year, toured round London in a company with Miss Ada Blanche and Mr. Gus Elen, and Christmas 1894-5 found her playing "second boy" in "Sinbad the Sailor," at Her Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen, a success she repeated at Dundee before coming south. Miss St. Ruth has a great love of change and adventure, and is evidently aware exactly what she can do, for she is not planning to play Juliet, and in her present production allotted herself only a small comedy part. She has never studied music, but sings, plays, and composes by ear, and has composed much of the music for her play, it being suggested to her by the native songs in Swaziland.

Not many play-bills are so interesting as this, which proclaims the first performance of Ibsen's new play, "John Gabriel Borkman," in England. Mr. Heinemann hopes to publish it in Mr. Archer's subtle English some time this month. Meantime, the ridiculous state of the law of copyright rendered the performance at the Avenue necessary.

I have collected another budget of excellent new play-titles. "The Waterloo Cup" is the money-drawing name of a forthcoming melodrama, the representation of the Final Heat in the above-mentioned "classic event" ranking as one of the sensations of the piece, together with a skating carnival, a murder in a safe, and a fight for life on a church-steeple. The last-named item seems reminiscent of "Notre Dame." "From Scotland Yard," "Man's Enemy," a study in dipsomania suggested by a well-known line in "Othello," and a bicycling drama, aptly entitled "Wheels Within Wheels," make up my present list.

At 10.30 a.m.

JOHN GABRIEL BORKMAN

SKUESPIL I FIRE AKTER AF HENRIK IBSEN

PERSONERNE:

John Gabriel Borkman	Mr. H. L. Brækstad
Fru Gunhild Borkman	Miss Amy Hutchinson
Student Erhart Borkman	Mr. William Heimann
Frokone Eller Renthjem	Miss Elisabeth Robins
Fru Fanny Wilton	Miss E. Hepworth Dixon
Vilhelm Foldal	Mr. Malcolm Salaman
Frida Foldal	Mrs. Brækstad
Fru Borkman's Stuepige	Miss Pawling

Hanlempen forlægges om udstændig på den retthæmmede familiepris uden for koncertsalen

Manager - - - Mr. C. O. COMPTON

ADMISSION TWO GUINEAS

Only the other day I referred to a ghastly electrocution scene in an English melodrama. A similar incident, I find, appears in an American piece that has lately been produced. But in this play the electrocution, although legally sanctioned, and with the "operator" shown standing in readiness with his hand on the switchboard, is prevented by the tardy confession of a witness to the murder of a policeman, thus saving an innocent man from an awful death. I fancy that some of these sensation scenes read better than they actually play.

Something akin to the main situation in the historic story of Virginiaus—only it was self-murder, and not child-murder, that was perpetrated—took place at Leeds the other day. A poor wretch, walking through the local shambles, snatched up a knife from a butcher's shop and cut his own throat. Strange that he should unwittingly employ the very means which such modern writers as Macaulay and Sheridan Knowles have extolled in verse.

Miss Eleanor Lane, a handsome and talented American actress, who appeared with some personal success in an extraordinary so-called farcical comedy at the Novelty, the other afternoon, has, I am told, acquired reputation across the Atlantic in the companies formerly headed by W. J. Florence, Rosina Vokes, and Rose Coghlan. In appearance Miss Lane somewhat resembles Miss Maxine Elliot, who has lately obtained a divorce from her husband, Mr. McDermott, a New York lawyer.

Mr. S. Creagh Henry, who boldly braved the Grosvenor Syndicate's minatory announcements and forestalled their production of "The Sorrows of Satan" at the Shaftesbury by bringing out his version, aptly entitled "The Prince of Darkness," at Plymouth, is an actor who numbers earnestness and enthusiasm among his qualifications for success. Mr. Henry is tall, slight of build, pale of complexion, handsome, and of an almost Italian style of appearance; thus he is physically well fitted to represent this modern Mephistopheles. At Plymouth Miss Henry was supported in leading parts by Mr. Tripp Edgar and Mr. Rose Meller, Miss Granville sustaining in the Shaftesbury production the analogous rôle to that filled down West by Miss Meller.

FOR PARENTS AND OTHERS.*

Mr. Alfred West says his book is written "for boys and their parents," and a book about school life, interesting to both those great classes, is a remarkable achievement. I don't believe there is a father, with even the rudiments of humour, who will fail to read this story with keen enjoyment and considerable profit. Mr. West knows the inner working of a school, its discipline, its etiquette, its code of morals, and its humours. He knows it from the boy's standpoint, the master's standpoint, and from that particular coign of disadvantage which is the observatory of too many parents. There may be a dash of caricature in the portraits of Eliot Hutchinson's father and mother. The father who withdraws his son from a school where the "torpid condition" of the youngster's liver is not sufficiently studied, and the mother who takes her darling a hamper, and is indignant because the rules of the school will not permit him to devour the contents in greedy isolation, may strike some readers as too humorous to be true. But every schoolmaster could tell stories of parents quite as ludicrous. Mr. West is perfectly impartial. Some of

his sketches of incompetent practitioners in the education business are drawn from life. Mr. Ganesborough Jones, who discourses to the boys on literature, and couples Milton with the latest minor poet, is a type by no means unfamiliar. "The vast majority of parents," says a shrewd and capable schoolmaster in this book, "are really most docile and considerate and grateful people. Of course, you come across a disagreeable one now and then, but I can tell you this—only you mustn't say I said so, or else I should be torn in pieces by my professional brethren—as far as my experiences goes, there's a far larger percentage of hopelessly impossible persons among schoolmasters than there is among their clients." This will be comforting doctrine to many boys who yearn for redress of grievances during the holidays. Moreover, they will find in Mr. West's story a series of fresh and entertaining incidents of school, described with immense zest by a writer who has observed everything in this particular world, and who has an inexhaustible sympathy with all the phases of boyhood. The growth of Eliot Hutchinson, from the spoilt darling and thorough-paced muff to an intelligent, painstaking, and wholly lovable boy, is told with such intimate knowledge and such breezy humour that the middle-aged reviewer would be ungrateful indeed if he did not acknowledge his debt to an author in whose pages he has renewed the joys and sorrows of his school-days.

L. F. A.

NEIGHBOURS.

Whether it is a coincidence or not, I do not know; but it certainly is a fact that the two nicest shops in Bond Street—or, indeed, in the West End, for the matter of that—stand side by side. The name over the one is Ivanhoe and Co., and that over the other is Jeanne d'Arc. A name such as this last, as you can imagine, can only belong to a dressmaking establishment. And so it does, while Ivanhoe and Co. are vendors of works of art in all its branches. Both of these firms do business with the rank and fashion of the town. At five o'clock, in fact, upon any afternoon during the season, Ivanhoe's is crowded with young swells "frock-coated and top-hatted within an inch of their lives," who not only come to buy for those about to marry, and those whom they would like to marry, some dear little article in tortoiseshell, silver, satin-wood, or bronze, but to talk and smoke a cigarette with their old school-friend the proprietor.

For the gentleman who owns the business and trades under the name of Ivanhoe is one Jack Matheson to wit (though everyone doesn't know it), educated at Eton and at a German gymnasium, with a view to going into his father's office in the City. But his father had failed and could not help him, so he had borrowed money of an old school-friend to start life upon, and had looked upon a retail business as his quickest means of repaying the same. He had remarkable taste, and not a single thing in his "Gallery," as he would call it, but was pretty or quaint. So Ivanhoe's soon became known and visited, the borrowed capital was repaid, and our young friend the proprietor became a general favourite with his customers, for, besides all this, he had the manners of Athos, and, in fact, treated his only assistant with the courtly silence of that famous gentleman in his dealings with Grimaud.

"Jeanne d'Arc," too, was only a *nom-de-guerre*. Nor will it be a surprise to those who are versed in these matters to learn that so warlike a title attempted to conceal the identity of the most feminine and dainty of her sex. She was not above five feet four was



MR. A. WEST.

Photo by Walter and Sons, Reading.

Miss Pucell, and not more than twenty-three years of age. She had the sweetest little face and *retroussé* nose, the most fascinating of manners and laughing blue eyes. Her guardians' consent had only been reluctantly given, but from the very time—two years ago—when she summoned up the pluck to employ the insurance money, which was all that was left of her parents (except their army connections), in a shop in Bond Street she had been a success. Her taste was faultless, and her judgment true, though severe. She became sought after and visited at first for the sake of her taste and her dresses, and, no doubt, would afterwards have been for her own sake had she wished.

For two years the proprietors of these abutting establishments had each been coming down to the same at a time as close to the stroke of ten as possible, so that they had had an opportunity of noticing one another at least once a day. Matheson gradually came to take an interest in his dainty little neighbour who always dressed so neatly, looked so happy, and came down so punctually to business; while the lady who traded under the name of "Jeanne d'Arc" did not fail to notice that the gentleman from next door, who was always dressed in sombre grey or black, was tall and handsome, good to gaze upon, and as much like an old public-school man as any tradesman (she thought, the little worldling) could look. The juxtaposition of these young people soon began to interest their customers also. The men who had left their sisters in at "D'Arc's" would chaff "old" Matheson about his pretty neighbour, and those dear girls, their sisters, would laughingly say to Jeanne that she "really must make haste, as they must go and have a talk with Mr. Ivanhoe. You know—he is so handsome," and with that they would wink with both their laughing eyes, as only English girls know how.

And so it went on—and on. The two neighbours still remained unknown to one another, except for a regular mutual meeting of the eyes, and nothing more, until Lady Crooke, of Hooke Hall and Brook Street, took them in hand.

She arranged that, upon the same afternoon when "Jeanne d'Arc" was to come in and advise her daughter what to take to Cowes and Homburg, Mr. "Ivanhoe" should come in and suggest a new plan of decoration for her drawing-room, which was to be done up after the season's end. There was nothing so very diabolical about that; and then, out of sheer kindness, after she had taken "Ivanhoe" through all the reception-rooms and obtained his advice, she invited him to take tea in her boudoir, where (to her surprise) she found Jeanne awaiting her.

There is now a door leading out of the back of Messrs. Ivanhoe's gallery into Jeanne d'Arc's office and sanctum. No one knows of its existence, for it is concealed by a full-length portrait in oils of the wife of the head of the firm. The portrait is a speaking likeness of the lady who trades under the name of Jeanne d'Arc.

F. SAMUEL.

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this Evening and every Evening during the Week at 9.30. Also on Wednesday

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* "His First Year at School." By Alfred West. London: T. Fisher Unwin.

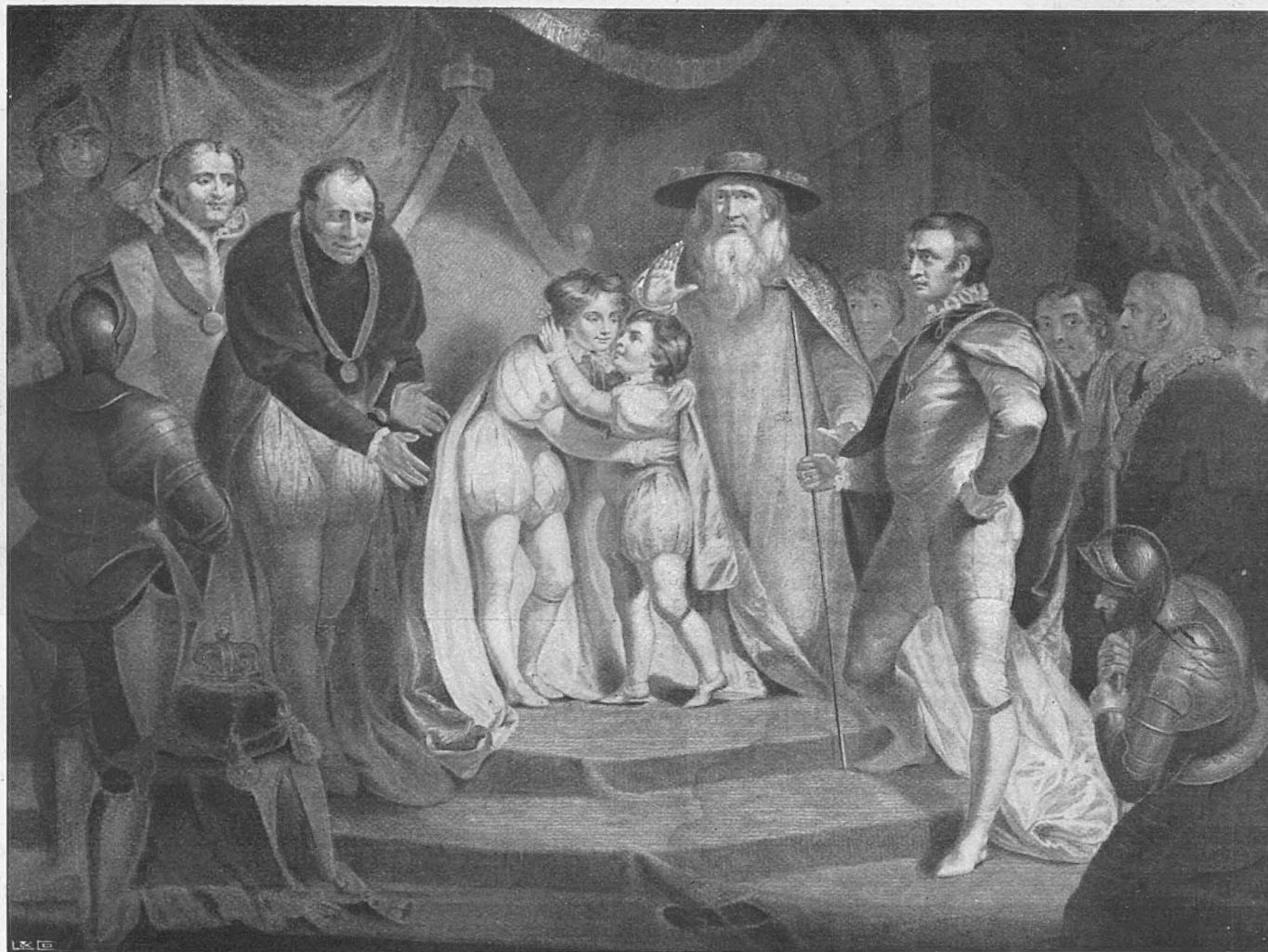
"RICHARD III." AT THE LYCEUM THEATRE.

It was very wonderful, very strange, very Irvingesque—was it Shaksperian? In my very humble opinion, the answer must be "no." Purists will be delighted that "Richard III." has been purged of Colley Cibber, though I am not confident that the scorn poured upon the interpolated "So much for Buckingham," is well founded. Yet, seeing that Sir Henry has the idea that "Richard III." is a purely one-part study of character, and shaped the whole drama to meet this view, I am not sure that we are much nearer Shakspere than before.

I should be the last in the world to pose as an authority concerning the dramatist, or even to speak with confidence, yet I cannot help suggesting that Shakspere had not in his mind the idea of writing a long and elaborate study of character, but was endeavouring to present a series of pictures of history. Indeed, I am bound to say that, as a school-boy, I had a decided prejudice against the historical plays. The dramas which dealt with fanciful subjects gave me pleasure, but those which seemed to be history lessons in disguise—"medicated drama," to adapt the term admired by Oliver Wendell Holmes—took no hold on me.

with the part so handled as to bring it into proportion with the real play, might give an exceedingly interesting picture of the times and the man who for a short while ruled them. I hope that nothing I have said will be deemed a denial of the actual skill of the performance. After all, the actor must play his part according to his own concept, and when a man is able to carry out a concept so consistently and vividly as Sir Henry Irving, and with a power to hold the house for so long a time, one cannot refuse him his due meed of admiration. It was characteristic of the performance that, while the older actors played to thrill and startle, the present Richard—or rather, the one, alas! now off the boards for what all must hope will be but a short time—carefully avoids playing for points, and is content to interest, not excite, his audience. Yet saying this omits reference to the strange fascination of a performance which suggested something really diabolical, and is one of the most memorable in the annals of the theatre.

Our generation has not had many Richards to study. Indeed, a large proportion of us can barely recollect the Irving production of twenty years ago. Barry Sullivan is becoming only a name, and we have to draw comparison from Mr. Mansfield's performance at the Globe some



[From the Painting by James Northcote, R.A., 1791.]

PRINCE : Richard of York ! how fares our loving brother ?
YORK : Well, my dread lord ; so must I call you now.

In our days it is different, and I feel that the true interest in "Richard III." lies quite as much in the host of minor characters as in the delineation of the prodigious Richard.

What is one's impression of the Saturday night at the Lyceum? One recollects handsome, characteristic scenes, admirably painted, filled with crowds of strangely and often beautifully dressed puppets, and everywhere a pale, haggard, elderly devil, sneering and jeering, and pulling the strings awry rather out of pure pleasure in wickedness than ambition. No doubt this Richard, this more than middle-aged Mephistopheles, is curious, original, and interesting. It is surprising to see with what ingenuity the actor has fitted into the play a character which seems quite different from that conceived by the dramatist. The keynote of the present performance is subtlety and intellectuality. So strong is this impression that one is surprised to find that a man so entirely above all the other characters in brain-force should have succumbed in the end. Now, the Richard of the play undoubtedly was cunning, and the Richard of history a man of brains as well as of really sound views of government, but with, I think, little of the Machiavellian craftiness suggested by the actor.

I think it would be far more original to give us a young Richard, full of fire and impetuosity—a man who might have been good but for the terrible impulse of ambition—a creature cunning, treacherous, but not bloodthirsty; unscrupulous, yet unwilling to commit needless crimes, and, above all, with some charm of manner. Such a Richard,

years back. I cannot help regretting that during the Benson season at the same theatre Richard was not given. True playgoers deeply deplore the fact that Mr. Benson's venture was not more successful, and many of us believe that if he would come back to town he would receive sufficient support to give him the success he deserves. I should very much like to see him in the part. Comparing recollections of Mansfield's production and the present performance, I seem to see in the one case a set of lively moving pictures, with a certain feeling of gaiety, despite their bloodiness and feverish life, as compared with the grim dream of horror now offered to us. Yet, of course, I know what a difference there is between the artistic value of the two enterprises.

As regards the company it is difficult to speak, seeing that there are so many who should be mentioned. Mr. Frank Cooper, the Richmond, earned the gratitude of everybody by his brightness and suggestion of rich life. There was really a splendid effect in the introduction of this picture of youth and hope into the gloomy atmosphere of age and doubt. Mr.—Cooper Cliffe, the Clarence, delivered the famous dream speech almost admirably. A very effective little piece of work was the Edward of Mr. Gordon Craig. No one will envy Miss Geneviève Ward the heavy cursing part, with which she struggled bravely and ably. Miss Lena Ashwell gave a pleasant sketch of the young Prince, while Miss Norman played cleverly as the still younger. The two murderers were so good that I wish more of their part had been retained.

MONOCLE.

SMALL TALK.

Let me preface my gossip this week by wishing you all a very happy New Year!

Here is a Christmas card from another far-off corner of the world. It is the work of Mr. P. C. de Wet, and shows Mrs. John Bull and Mrs. Boer coqueting with a nigger, whose Beardsley-esque bags are the only up-to-date thing about him.



A CHRISTMAS CARD FROM CAPE COLONY.

Haysom, of Southampton, who have recently completed their portion of the work upon the Battenberg Memorial.

I am glad to observe that Mr. Cecil Brown, in an introductory chapter to his work on "The Horse in Art and Nature" (Chapman and Hall), has a good word to say for that striking dun charger on which Charles I. has been seated by Vandyck. It is the best specimen of horseflesh in the National Gallery. The horse has been a favourite subject for sculptors and painters since the time of the Pharaohs, but has never been so truthfully dealt with as by the French school of battle-painters represented by Meissonier and Alphonse de Neuville. They were masters of the details of the horse's anatomy, both in rest and in motion, and, by a graduated series of studies, Mr. Brown seeks to introduce art students to a knowledge of this most difficult subject. The work appears with a prefatory blessing from Mr. Onslow Ford. For the purposes of comparison a human skeleton is figured in the first part of this work, and it is by far the most wonderful human skeleton I have ever seen. The owner of the skeleton must have been an extraordinary specimen of his race. It lacks a couple of cervical vertebrae, and a rib, evidently dropped out from the upper part of the series; it has three sternal ribs too many, also a couple of superfluous lumbar vertebrae, not to mention numerous other oddities.

Very few literary ladies have married into the aristocracy, and the shyness of the latter in presenting themselves will doubtless be increased by the action of Delicia-Mavis Clare-Vaughan in cutting off her errant husband with a beggarly annuity of £150. In spite of his militant Radicalism, the circumstances of Mr. Grant Allen's birth must be peculiarly satisfactory to his aloof feeling of Hilltopism. His grandfather, Charles William Grant, a scion of the Scotch house of Blairindy, succeeded his mother as fifth Baron de Longueil, and the title is still, I believe, the only one dating back to the French régime in Canada which is recognised by the British Government.

My contemporary the *Lark* still continues to carol gaily in its own eccentric way in San Francisco. Here is the way it greeted Christmas.

Debrett this year puts forward a strong plea for legislation to prevent the improper assumption of baronetcies supposed to be extinct or dormant by persons who cannot or do not attempt to prove their right. The custom is an old one, and it is a matter of notoriety among genealogists that several Nova Scotia baronetcies have been "jumped" at various times by the ancestors of the present holders, whose claims are now never questioned. I agree with Debrett it is high time the scandal should end.



Reproduced from the "Lark."

All the principals of the old orchestra have been already retained for this year's grand opera season at Covent Garden, and Mr. Grau, who is at present presiding over opera in New York, has secured some new and promising talent. Of the established favourites, we shall see the brothers De Reszke, Madame Calvé (most admirable actress, most superb singer), Madame Eames, Signor Van Dyck, and many others whose names are pleasantly familiar to opera-goers. The part of impresario will be filled by Mr. Grau on behalf of the Operatic Syndicate, while Arthur Collins and Neil Forsyth will be in their old places. From the way in which applications for the season are already arriving it would appear safe to predicate success. The old fears concerning a time of operatic anarchy have fortunately proved unfounded. Londoners will not find themselves at the mercy of strange syndicates and people with axes to grind. This is lucky, for irresponsible operatic management is a very nasty thing for all concerned, and comes to utter collapse in nine cases out of ten, with great damage to finances, reputations, and tempers.

The festive and unrestrained humours of the pantomime season render it excusable for me to quote a curious answer lately concocted by an examinee. It runs, "Whitby is famous for Whitby and his Cat." Is poor Dick Whittington's fame at last waning?

As a contrast to the Christmas-pudding aspect of the season, I present you with a picture of a famine-stricken Indian, for not all of her Majesty's subjects are wallowing in the fat of the land.



A STARVING INDIAN.

A sign of the times—"Art and Actuality" again. In the pantomime at the Royal Opera House, Leicester, one of the finest theatres in the provinces, the usual transformation-scene has been replaced by an exhibition of Mr. Paul's Animatograph, introducing local scenes and incidents.

Apropos of the present stop-gap revival of "Betsy," at the Criterion, a notable similar reproduction of Burnand's always popular adaptation, at the same theatre, was that of August 1892. Miss Jennie Rogers then filled the title-part; Mr. Blakeley played W. J. Hill's original rôle of Mr. Birkett; David James the younger was an excellent Mr. Dawson; Miss Ellis Jeffreys, who has now "arrived," was the Madame Polenta; and others in the cast were Mr. Giddens, Miss Marie Studholme and Mr. Sidney Valentine, both now celebrated, and Miss Fanny Robertson. That revival of "Betsy" ran for about six weeks in the dull season.

Mr. Arthur Morrison might find another "Old Iago" in the waterside parts of Deptford. One street in the neighbourhood to which I particularly allude is mainly occupied by "smashers" and by burglars. Most of the "best cribs" in the S.E. suburban district are popularly supposed to be "cracked" by practitioners from this street.

Mr. Louis Calvert's promised revival of "Antony and Cleopatra" at Manchester, with Mrs. Beerbohm Tree as the Egyptian Queen and himself as Antony, should not only further strengthen the Calvert traditions in the grimy but not unintellectual city, but should also afford good scope for some useful comparative criticism. How will Mrs. Tree's Cleopatra rank beside those of Sarah Bernhardt, of Signora Duse—an admittedly disappointing performance—and of Mrs. Langtry, whose revival of the play at the Princess's in the autumn of 1890 was chiefly notable for the superb pageantry in which the Hon. Lewis Wingfield did some of his latest important work. Some playgoers may remember the Cleopatra of Miss Wallis; but few will recollect the performance of Miss Glyn in the same part, or the Antonys of Phelps and James Anderson. I doubt not that Mr. Louis Calvert will stage the play as carefully as he staged "Henry IV." his revival of which certainly paved the way for Mr. Tree's reproduction.

By the death of the Earl of Normanton, at the advanced age of seventy-nine, his relatives and friends lose one of the kindest-hearted of noblemen. In his youth one of the most agreeable, the most sought after, of the gilded youth of that period, Lord Normanton never lost that kindness of nature, that ease of conversation and manner, that had earned him a more youthful popularity. Lord Normanton married in 1856 a beauty of that day, one of the Keppels, and he leaves this lady and a large family to mourn his loss. His daughter, Lady Clarendon, whose death a couple of years ago he felt so keenly, inherited her mother's good looks, and was a magnificent horsewoman, ever in the front flight. The late Earl experienced another severe loss in the death of his eldest son, Viscount Somerton, about a year ago; this lamented young nobleman was succeeded in the title by his next brother, who now assumes his father's rank. The family of Agar, of which Lord Normanton was the head, sprang from James Agar of Gowran Castle, Kilkenny, and the first holder of the title was Archbishop of Dublin, and was created a peer long after he had entered the Church—indeed, after he had been made Bishop of Cloyne. The conferring of a temporal peerage on a bishop is, I believe, a very unusual occurrence. The late Lord Normanton's favourite residence was Somerley, amid the lovely New Forest scenery, and there his remains were interred last week, many sorrowing friends paying their last respects at the distant "Wessex" burying-place.

To confess a lack of interest in dances is, perhaps, to admit that one has reached the unenviable condition of old-fogeydom; yet, notwithstanding the risk, such a confession is mine. Dances are not in my line, and yet I attended one a few nights since at the Kensington Town Hall, which, I am assured by good judges, was an immense success, and was, I understand, attended by all sorts of smart people. Yet, though the scene was a pretty one and endlessly attractive, and youthful débutantes swam past me, clad in white tulle (which, I am credibly informed, is the thing this season for those charming creatures), as they enjoyed the merry movements of the new dance, the "Washington Post," which bids fair to supersede the well-known "Barn Dance," yet must I admit my sympathies were more with the object of the ball than that function itself. In this I take a deep interest, for it was the well-being of the Surgical Home for Boys at Banstead that drew all these agreeable folks together. This institution, which is already doing excellent work, though it needs many additional supporters, undoubtedly meets a long-felt want, and it is, I understand, almost unique of its particular kind in England. Any of my readers who are interested in this most excellent work can learn full particulars from the honorary secretary, Mr. G. Borham Carter, and if I can enlist their sympathies I shall be more than delighted.

Once again the Empire management has secured the work of a beautiful and graceful Spanish woman. This time it is the Señorita Carmen, who comes to us equipped with a perfect genius for performances on the wire. Her entry is a model for English players in every branch

of stage work; she compels the attention of all the people in the house. On the wire she swings facing her audience, perhaps the most difficult feat in connection with her work; she uses a skipping-rope with an agility and grace that most performers on *terra firma* lack, and throughout her short but striking turn the spectator never can forget that he is



MISS AMY FARRELL.

Photo by Ellis, Upper Baker Street, N.W.

looking at a beautiful woman. This is high praise, for the average gymnast and wire-walker can be charming in repose only, and does not, apparently, consider the ugly contortions that go to produce an effect. Señorita Carmen seems to be treading on air, to acquire pose upon pose with an ease that would make one believe that the laws of gravitation had been suspended for her special benefit. It must be placed to the credit of the variety stage that it does enable us to see the full beauty of a pose. Our new visitor will probably remain on the halls throughout her professional life. The charm of her work is not a little due to her nationality, but there are hundreds and thousands of beautiful women who cannot develop their natural grace as they would be compelled to upon the boards. The Señorita will delight artists because they will understand her, and laymen because they can appreciate even though they know not why. Her turn strengthens a strong programme.

The Lyceum "Santa Claus" was too good to get shelved after one season, so Mr. Barrett's beautiful show has found its way to the gorgeous Empire Music-Hall at Edinburgh this season. Miss Amy Farrell, who was Queen Mab at the Lyceum, has now risen to the rôle of Maid Marian.

The editor of the very much up-to-date New York *World* has lately made a somewhat interesting experiment. Being anxious to inform his readers how far the human weakness for mirror-gazing extended in the animal kingdom, he despatched a reporter, armed with a mirror of ample dimensions, to a large menagerie in New York, accompanied by an artist to record the effect. The reporter, arguing, no doubt, from what he knew of the human world, expected to be well received, but the inhabitants of the menagerie showed him that, if they possessed some of man's faults in an exaggerated degree, they were free from his little failing of mirror-gazing. "The result in several instances," says the reporter, "was so interesting that the experiment will be repeated, except in the few cases where the effect upon the animal was so violent as to threaten serious results." His reflection sent an old lion into such a fit of fury that he nearly committed suicide, while a tiger had his wits almost driven out of him at the first glance in the mirror. Of all the animals experimented upon, the monkeys only had nerves strong enough to stand a peep in the mirror, and the effect raised in them was rather a feeling of curiosity than of self-congratulation. The reporter unfortunately neglected to observe whether the lady monkeys showed any greater love for their images than their gentlemen friends. Perhaps, if the animals could grasp the idea that it is not a rival that is concealed behind the mirror, but their own sweet faces that look out at them, they would become reconciled to the satisfaction of a long stare.



SEÑORITA CARMEN.

Photo by Marceau, San Francisco.

If he had done nothing else, Napoleon I. would have deserved well of France as the founder of the admirable institution where the daughters of those whom their country delighted to honour receive a good education and a start in life in a fashion that savours nothing of charity. Indeed, the mere fact that a girl is or has been a pupil at the St. Denis "Légion d'Honneur House of Education" is considered a guarantee of good breeding, and of every quality going to make a good wife or a good teacher. The daughters, the granddaughters, the sisters and the nieces of knights or officers of the famous Order are alone eligible, and nine-tenths count among their immediate forebears distinguished members of the French army or navy. Since Madame Campan—whose amusing memoirs throw perhaps the best light on the world of the First Empire—to whom Napoleon confided the organisation of the establishment, six women, all distinguished for "virtue and learning," have worn the broad ribbon of the Legion of Honour in their quality of temporary mothers to the daughters of France. Each girl is prepared for some active working career. A considerable number become teachers, either in the institution itself or in the Government schools, and quite a proportion make happy marriages, which are, however, entirely arranged on a French basis.

Few people realise the many parts played by the Christmas ox; a 1200 lb. steer spells some eight hundred pounds of edible beef; but not an ounce of the beast is wasted. The hide is sold to the tanners; special dealers buy the tail, the tongue, the brains, the liver, and the tripe. The purer fat is exported to Holland, and, it is to be feared, comes back to us in the form of Dutch butter; the bones are boiled down to gelatine, and from the hoofs finally comes neat's-foot oil, while from the residuum are worked up combs and other horn goods. It is hardly necessary to point out the varied destinations of the eatable portions of the animal, from the sirloin which finds its way to the millionaire's table, to the shin-bones which help to make the excellent soup now so often to be found in the humblest cook-shops.

If you have heard Miss Marie Tempest sing the sorrows of the amorous gold-fish in "The Geisha," you will have learnt that Japan is the great home of the prettiest of fishes. There is also a regular trade in them in Indiana, and yet it is only twelve years ago that Mr. Shoup, the senior member of the Spring Lake Fishery, imported a dozen small gold-fish from the royal aquariums of Japan, building up from that small start one of the most interesting and profitable businesses, not only in the United States, but in the world. Of course, as is the case in everything else, he who would fain make his fortune by gold-fish breeding must make up his mind to take a great deal of trouble. The gold-fish is born silver, and something like a year elapses before he deigns to change to the golden or red colour

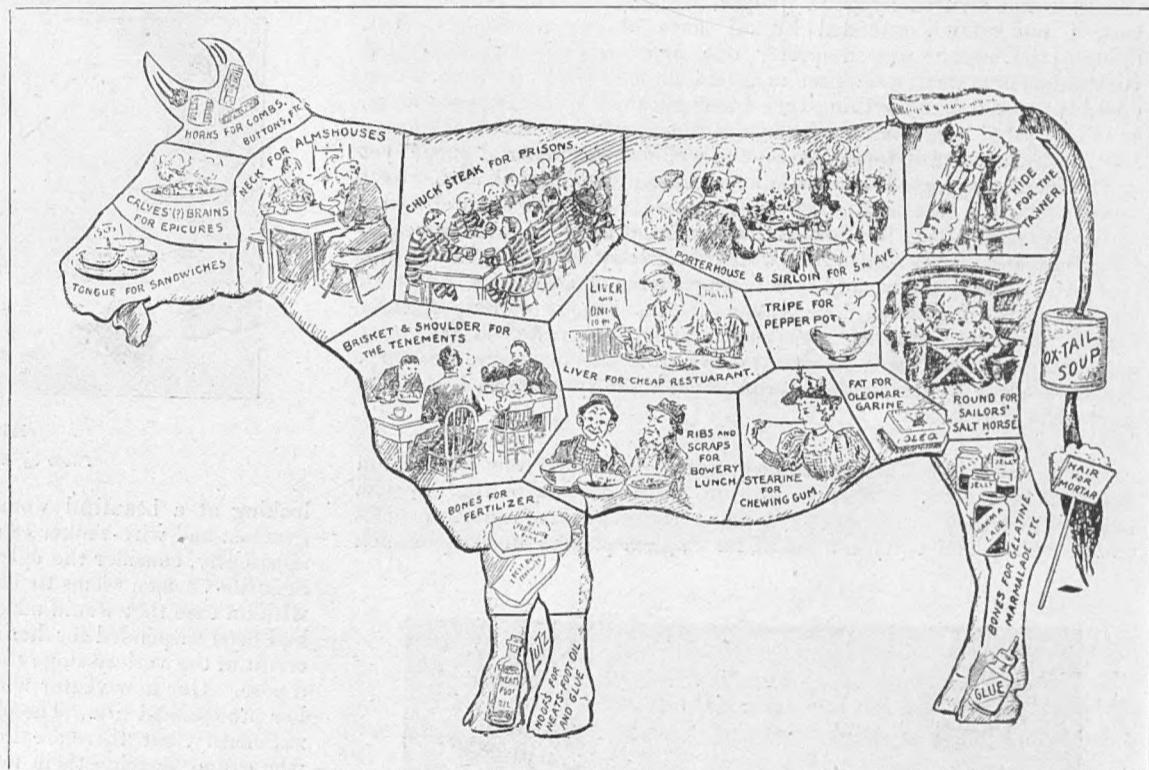
which makes him a marketable commodity, and yet, curiously enough, the most valuable gold-fish are pearl-colour. This variety is so rare that specimens are generally kept for exhibition. When a specimen is perfect, it is possible to look through a pearl-fish as you can now do an opaque body treated with the Röntgen rays. That is to say, you can see the entire skeleton, and even observe the workings of the brain of the tiny water-wonder. By the way, people do not realise that the water in which gold-fish are kept should be frequently changed, and that the more water they have the better they thrive.

Notwithstanding all the facts and figures on which the teetotalers base their views, there are worse things than "drink." The morphomaniac is familiar to us all, if not from experience, from hearsay; but of late cocaine threatens to oust the more familiar drug. Of course, as an anaesthetic, cocaine is an invaluable deadener of pain; but as an intoxicant it creates even more ravages than opium or morphine, for the victim of cocaine is, under certain conditions, liable to become temporarily insane, and in that state he may commit any injury to himself or to another. Probably, if all the truth came out, it would be found that many otherwise inexplicable acts committed by doctors, and those enjoying similar opportunities of obtaining drugs with no difficulty, were done when their perpetrator was under the influence of this drug. In New York alone there are said to be sixty thousand people who cannot live without constantly using a cocaine hypodermic syringe, and the same thing will soon be true of Paris, and in a minor degree of London.

These days Scotland is doing its best to disprove the old sarcasm about the surgical operation and joking "wi' deeficulty." The latest argument is *St. Mungo*, a "social and satirical" weekly, which is issued from the Glasgow *Evening News* office. Mr. Neil Munro, the author of "The Lost Pibroch," is, I believe, not unconnected with the new

publication. Mr. Munro is assistant editor of the *Evening News*, and does the art criticism for that paper. At Highland Society gatherings in Glasgow, which are appallingly numerous, he is a welcome guest, and this winter he is to deliver two lectures to such bodies. It may interest some to know that he can play the bagpipes. *St. Mungo*, I should say, is not the only "humorous" paper Glasgow can boast of. The *Bailie* has been in existence for years, and now has taken on quite a magisterial air. Curiously enough—or should it be naturally enough?—Edinburgh is the only large town in Scotland in which a comic paper cannot exist. The last attempt at humorous journalism there was *Great Scot!* It had a humble career, and died quietly. Someone has said that the *Scotsman* did it out in the same line of business. Aberdeen has actually three comic journals running at this moment.

Those who dwell in the Better Land—that is, within the four-mile radius—have no idea of the sufferings of the suburbs. When the season of mud comes upon the land, when the sun forgets to shine and the fog to lift, London is bad enough, but the suburbs are worse. There the shops cannot dispel the gloom, neither can crowded streets suggest cheerfulness. Everything, everybody, is limp and cheerless; one and all surrender to the supremacy of the crossing-sweeper. When suburban history comes to be written, the tyrannies of this creature will startle an apathetic world. He dominates a street-corner and whines for charity, following pedestrians twenty yards with a tale of woe that does not vary with the years. The crossing-sweeper does no work except with his tongue. He is prone to cadging and sitting on the curb,



THE CHRISTMAS OX.

contemplating the mud around him. On the bright, fine days that come to visit the English winter by occasional accident, he is still at his post. There is nothing to sweep, but there are people to eadge from, and he does not complain—except to them. He will spatter with mud the old lady who neglects his plaints; he will set dogs to fight, and fraternise with doctors' boys, telegraph-boys, and others who have no need to hurry; he conciliates a policeman—in short, he is an abomination little better than the mud he pretends to sweep away, and I do not like him a little bit. He is foul-mouthed to a surprising extent when sudden circumstance causes him to drop the mask of civility; in short, the crossing-sweeper—suburban variety—fills me with such rage and indignation that I can scarce restrain my pen.

The truth about the much-discussed "Sorrows of Satan" is not without interest to the many readers of Miss Marie Corelli. When a syndicate was formed to produce the play, the book was handed to two gentlemen to dramatise. The fruit of the combined genius was submitted to Miss Evelyn Millard and the leading man, who both declared that it was no use to attempt its production. In fact, they definitely declined to take up their parts. Thereupon, on the suggestion of Miss Millard, Dr. Haddon Chambers was called in to vitalise the sorrowful piece. The dramatist said he would do his best if certain alterations in the book could be effected. Miss Corelli had no objection, but the first two dramatists have protested very strongly indeed, and at time of writing Haddon Chambers refuses to continue the work unless he is assured that there will be no legal trouble. Clearly Satan's Sorrows have a nasty way of growing. At first they coquetted round the Haymarket, then they went elsewhere with no better success, and here we have a tangle that threatens to commit the Sorrows to the pigeon-hole for ever. This is what true genius, and honesty, and satire, and wit, and general brilliancy has to put up with. "It's a great big shime."

The unveiling of the statue of Surgeon-Major Parke on the Leinster Lawn, Dublin, Saturday week, was very neatly done by Lord Roberts.



STATUE OF SURGEON-MAJOR PARKE AT DUBLIN.
Photo by Chancellor, Dublin.

me-down" wholesome meal which is usually offered to paupers, Mr. Elliott has given them a hotel dinner with a high-class and indigestible menu, and wines which would suit a City company or the Old Boys Dinner of some public school. After all, why should not the poor know something of what the rich learn to despise? Mr. Elliott will have gladdened the hearts of the poor of Islington, and will have delighted the workers of Toynbee Hall and kindred institutions who have long endeavoured to dispense a charity which is not shoddy. "Real waiters" and all the ornaments of an ordinary restaurant pageant! How the paupers must have loved it and basked in the distinction of it all! Let us hope the New Vagabonds will follow Mr. Elliott, and entertain some of their brother Vagabonds outside the pale of education.

Smitten with the election fever, two neighbours living in Indiana christened lately their new-born sons and heirs respectively Abraham Lincoln Ulysses Grant William McKinley, and Thomas Jefferson Andrew Jackson James Monroe William Jennings Bryan. What troubles these fathers have prepared for their lads and everybody having dealings with the boys in after life!

Santa Claus didn't come to my stocking this Christmas, but I do not resent it, for I think (in retrospect) of the many visitors whom *The Sketch* seems to attract as a candle does a moth. And in this mood I lapse naturally into metre—

I sit in my den with papers and pen,
'Mid proof-sheets and "copy" galore,
And frowning, I fear, I suddenly hear
A shy little tap at my door.
It opens. I notice therat
The tip of a feather or pin,
And then comes the rim of a hat,
And a voice, "Is the editor in?"

Hey, presto! my frown as I bid her sit down,
And gather my senses that roan;
She sinks in a chair with the easiest air,
And makes herself quickly at home;
Then fixing poor me with her eye,
And tilting her pert little chin,
She says (and it's hard to deny),
"You might put my photograph in!"

She pencils her lid till her glances are hid
In shadows she fancies refined;
She carries a puff in the depths of her muf
(And she sometimes will leave it behind).
She ruefully hears my "perhaps,"
Till I feel to resist is a sin,
For her poor little world will collapse
If I won't put her photograph in.

Then she says she "must go," and I bow like a beau
(As one always should do to "the Fair"),
Nor can I resist the temptation to list
To the rustle of skirts on the stair.
My room has a fragrance of perfume awhile,
Which banishes any chagrin,
And a man who comes after might say with a smile,
"Ah, you've just had a visitor in!"

It is long since Mr. Eugene Stratton convulsed audiences by relating in his inimitable "spoken" how his "cousin" once presented his godson with a piece of plate, on which, to the horror of the child's parents, the name of a hotel was afterwards found to be inscribed. Mrs. Castle's escapade has now led her compatriots to investigate hotel pilfering, and some startling information is the result.

To begin with, Bibles and hair-pins seem to be special favourites with the kleptomaniacs who spend their lives as "paying guests." Indeed, more than one hotel-keeper declared that really good things should be chained down if they are likely to be handled by the average visitor. Pretty and peculiar hotel napkins or towels, brie-à-brac and silver trifles, disappear daily, and doubtless go to beautify hundreds of happy homes where mine host is never likely to find his way as an invited guest.

Breakages are, of course, another matter; but they form a considerable item in the debit account. Occasionally the customer breaks crockery or glass on purpose; but he who does this is mostly a patron of the German "bierstüben," and his action is meant as a delicate intimation that the glass in use is so thick as to deprive the drinker of his lawful quantity of beer. Now that washing-machines have been introduced into hotel kitchens, accidental breakages have been very much reduced. What a pity a washing-machine can't be introduced into every ordinary household! For there is no disagreeable, irksome, and necessary daily task to compare in unpleasantness with "washing up," as anyone who has tried it can tell.

My contemporary the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* already shows many signs of the increased liveliness which I knew would follow the change of proprietorship. It means now to eclipse all its rivals in the frequent presentation of extra plates, by giving a double-page supplement with every issue throughout the coming year. The subjects are to be taken primarily from the world of sport, and from the varied sphere of military and naval history—past, present, and to come—while the drama will also be laid under occasional tribute. The pictures are all to be the work of artists who have won special distinction in one or other of these groups of subjects. Herewith I reproduce the first of these supplements. It is called "The Alarm," and is the work of Mr. Charles Krener.



[By permission of the Berlin Photographic Co.
THE ALARM.—CHARLES KRENER.]

A correspondent writing me from Rugby indulges in a growl about the weather in the Pytchley country. One might really imagine he thought a special brand was prepared for that section of Northamptonshire, so bitter is he on the subject; but perhaps it may console him to know that friends in other parts of England and Ireland send me accounts almost equally dolorous. How, my Rugby friend desires me to say, can they hunt when (1) the low grounds are bogs or under water, (2) there is no scent, and (3) there is nothing but fog? I can't tell him; but I think he overstates the case somewhat, as a Daventry correspondent, writing on the same day, gives a brief but glowing account of a run he had with the Pytchley last week—

After pottering about after a fox for over an hour in the morning, scent so bad hounds could not carry the line at all, we had a rare good run in the afternoon. It was after lunch-time, and a good many people had gone home, giving it up as a bad job, when hounds spoke to the line as they had not done all day. We were on high ground, and scent had changed in its mysterious way from bad to good; hounds fairly flew over the grass, and gave us a clinking run over splendid country to Purser's Hills, where they lost him after forty minutes' run. Having to cross the railway threw us out a bit, but those who knew the country cut in again and saw all the best of it; they said hounds changed foxes, and very likely they did; but it was a clinking run all the same.

My Daventry friend goes on to discuss the "mysteries of scent," but I will not inflict upon readers of *The Sketch* two pages of reminiscence, query, and conjecture. When a really keen fox-hunter writes about scent, you can put down his letter; if he begins to "talk scent," as he is very liable to do after dinner, you must either smother him with a sofa-cushion or go away—only very drastic measures are efficacious.

Ah Wonk is a chow-chow, the property of Mr. W. R. H. Temple, who is devoted to this breed. He made his débüt in the judges' ring at the Pet Dog Show held in the Aquarium last May, when he won



AH WONK.

three first prizes in the open, limit, and novice classes. Since then he has taken awards at Tunbridge Wells, Brighton, the Crystal Palace, and at the show of his own club, besides many specials and a championship. Ah Wonk is an imported dog and is about twenty months old. He is a handsome black dog, and certainly, bar accidents, there is a victorious future before him and his master.

Wrestling in India, like prize-fighting in England and America, still draws crowds, and is considered by Indians of high position the king of sports. Many Rajahs keep their *pahlwans*, and pay them handsomely, and often bestow on them good pensions on retirement. In the Punjab there are at the present day two of these wrestlers (*pahlwans*), one a Sikh, by name Keekar Singh, the other a Mohammedan; both are in the service of Rajahs. Last year they wrestled in Lahore, in the presence of thousands of spectators, each combatant being paid about £250 to £300, whether he won or lost.

Lady Frederick Cavendish made a powerful appeal at a recent meeting of the Early-Closing Association and Traders' Parliamentary Alliance, by reciting some verses that recall the "Song of the Shirt" and preach a lesson as much needed. Here are the first two—

Stand, stand, stand, all through a dreary day;
Stand, stand, stand, when night has set her sway;
Stand, stand, stand, in woman's suffering plight;
Stand, stand, stand, or be vanquish'd in the fight.

Serve, serve, serve, and wear a winsome smile;
Serve, serve, serve, with aching feet the while;
Serve, serve, serve, 'neath the "walker's" watchful eye;
Serve, serve, serve, the lounger who doesn't buy.

The exhibition of paintings, drawings, and photographs in connection with Mellin's Art Competition will be held at the Queen's Hall from Monday to Friday. The prizes offered for the various classes amount to over one thousand pounds, and contributions of paintings, &c., have been received from children with the crudest knowledge of drawing, up to the best professional talent.

Miss Decima Moore's appearance in the Drury Lane pantomime reminds me that she has a great love of dogs. First certainly in size is her magnificent Irish wolf-hound Ulick, by Brenda out of Lufra, one of Lord Caledon's famous breed. Ulick, who is just over three years



MISS DECIMA MOORE'S WOLF-HOUND, ULLICK.

old, stands thirty-three inches to the shoulder, just two inches lower than his sire. His splendid coat of wiry hair is fawn-colour; his ears, which are soft and seem to invite caresses, are almost black, as is his mask. He is a gentle and affectionate dog, devoted to his mistress, and his size alone makes him an invaluable guard. Another of her pets is a smart-looking fox-terrier, Chilcombe Bramble, by Dysart Rambler out of Kitty Raby. Bramble is never so happy as when accompanying his mistress on a fishing expedition, a taste inherited from his mother, who is a most successful angler. She will watch with the greatest interest, and spring into the water, seize her fish just at the back of the head, and land it most cleverly, quite dead, but otherwise uninjured—a most unusual accomplishment for any dog to possess. Miss Decima contemplates adding a bulldog to her canine pets.

A volume of "limericks" is not a common thing, but that is what "Rhymes of the Regiment," by Starr Wood, consists of. It is issued by the enterprising new weekly, the *Regiment*, which seems to have come to stay. The rhymes are not by any means always good; but Mr. Wood's drawings have real humour, with a Caran d'Ache touch. The one on the Camel Corps is as funny as any—

There's one solace in riding on camels—
In the desert one's freed from the trammels
That curb speech in lands
Not exclusively sands,
For they are the most bumpy of mammals.

A few weeks ago, in these columns I wrote of the distant island of Fiji and of the possibility of a new industry, that of sponges, being developed among its inhabitants. My friend in Suva, who sent me the



MISS DECIMA MOORE AS AN ANGLER.

Fiji journal from which I quoted, wrote to me to wish me a "Happy Christmas" here in the Old Country, for which her sons, however far away, seem to retain an undying affection. He sent me a photograph Christmas card, with the words, "From Sunny Isles of South Pacific we send our love."

A provincial theatrical manager contemplates buying a motor-car, which will serve the double duty of acting as a means of bold advertisement in the daytime and of startling the occupants of the pit and gallery at night.

There are three young people on the stage who are easily mixed—Cissie Loftus, Kitty Loftus, and Kitty Lofting. The first and last have this in common, that they write books. At least, Miss Lofting compiled the Gilbert and Sullivan birthday-book that was given away at a recent ceremony, celebrating the thousandth anniversary of "The Mikado" at the Savoy Theatre. She is the eldest daughter of Mr. Henry S. Dacre,



MISS KITTY LOFTING.
Photo by Hana, Strand.

the well-known actor and manager, and late lessee of the Theatre Royal, Doncaster. Indeed, she comes of an old theatrical family, and she herself is touring in "Her Wedding-Day." She made her first appearance nine years ago, at the age of fifteen, and has been on the stage ever since. She varies her stage experience by writing short stories and verses. By the way, when is Miss Cissie Loftus to give us another book of jingle?

As I perambulated Piccadilly the other afternoon, looking for some chance capitalist who might be disposed to turn me into a limited liability company, or start an association to provide me with adequate support without delay, I chanced upon Trewey. Strictly speaking, I can't say how I did it, but to "chance upon" is a choice expression, and may stand. Now just a few months ago the shadowgraphist and cinématographer gave me to understand that he had made his pile, and when I told him it was my pile he had made and called upon him to deliver it up, he made a paltry excuse about wishing to retire. Under those circumstances I gave up further claims upon my rightful fortune. Trewey deceived me infamously. When we met in Piccadilly he told me that some wonderful pictures which will set all the town talking were at that moment in course of development; that he had written a one-act play for production next year, with himself in the title rôle and all the "fat"; and that he had several other ideas in active course of elaboration for years to come. Thereupon, with the frankness that is one of my greatest charms, I pointed out that I had no pictures on verge of production, no plays written or about to be written, no active intentions with regard to the future. Therefore, I requested him to hand over the pile aforementioned, with interest from the time when he falsely withheld it from me by alleging an intention to retire. I do not think that any right-minded man can deny the justice of my request, but Trewey declined to give up his work or his pile. Hence this paragraph and many tears that I cannot print.

It happened the other evening that I did discuss the world and the ways thereof with a lady of the ballet—a lady who adds to natural advantages of face and figure a shrewd insight into many things. Having devoted sufficient time to ethics, we entered the more interesting domain of active criticism, and my informant gave me several highly satisfactory and convincing reasons why certain people who are high and

haughty should be lowly and humble in their demeanour. I would be more explicit, but fear the remarks, although *bonâ fide*, were not intended for publication. While discussing a certain *dansuse*, the lady observed that, when dancing, this *dansuse* "took all her power from her arms." "What do you mean?" I asked. "What I say," she replied; and I explained that ladies so seldom mean what they say, or say what they mean, that my lack of comprehension was almost justified. Then I was assured that all dancers "take their strength" from some set of muscles, that the exertions of the *première* may be accompanied by violent twitching of the muscles of the arm or neck or jaw, or may be accompanied by excessive biting of the under lip. All these actions are apparently involuntary, but none the less clearly defined and quite noticeable to all in the dancer's vicinity. I intend to call upon my medical friends to furnish me with a full explanation.

Polyglot is the name of a new magazine to be published in January at Philadelphia on behalf of "students and amateurs of modern languages." It will print stories, poetry, humour, art and drama, sports and pastimes, and so on, selected and reproduced in their original languages, from the current literature of all nations.

When Christmas and New Year come round, as they insist upon doing with provoking regularity, the well-meaning man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of charity. He lavishes his gifts in nearly all directions; but he is apt to forget at least two classes of workers whom he meets only in the summer-time. I refer to the men in light-ships and the lock-keepers. Neither the one nor the other seeks or requires charity, but something might be done to relieve the deadly monotony of their lives by the distribution of books and papers. Life on a light-ship must be too awful for description at this time of year, when, barring the periodical visits of men bringing food, the only visitors take the form of wreckage. And at the locks, where all the sounds of summer have died away into silence, where sulky, dirty barges are almost the only passers-by, dreariness and dulness must reign supreme. All the people connected with locks and light-ships are forgotten in winter by their summer season friends, and I am in a position to state that they would be deeply grateful to thoughtful people who would send



SHY.
Photo by Rettaw, Edinburgh.

them literary solace for the tedious hours when neither duty nor occupation of any other sort is obtainable. Many people who buy papers and magazines allow them to be lost or destroyed after inspection. It would cost but little, and give next to no trouble, to send them where they would meet with keen appreciation.

SOCIETY ON WHEELS.

The list of visitors to the Riviera is growing daily. I hear that cycling is the pastime *par excellence*, and the costumes are varied and striking. Nice and Cannes are the principal centres. The latest arrivals, among others, at the former place are Lord and Lady Rollo, Lord and Lady Hastings, and Lord and Lady Verulam. Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone are expected also before very long. I am glad to hear that skirts are retaining their hold on cyclists, as being much more becoming than bloomers. Mrs. Fairclough, however, braves all opinions to the contrary, and prefers to ride in a rational dress.

Yet another show to describe, if I had the pluck to do so; but I have not, and can only say that this time it is the Emerald Isle that is responsible for it, and Dublin the venue. The Paddies, besides having their show, are making merry in these rainy days by holding cycle-dances and smoking-concerts, which seem very popular.

The Swiss bicycle is one of our latest additions to ease and comfort. It is said that, besides the back-rest giving comfort, it gives more power for driving the pedals, and enables the rider to utilise his force more effectively and with less fatigue. The inventor, M. Challand, claims that the support to the back of the rider gives more power. He argues that a rider in the ordinary position has only his own weight to depend

I hear that Mrs. Langtry is a most energetic cyclist. She looked very handsome when I saw her lately, walking through the town of Bury St. Edmunds with a party of friends. They had ridden from Kennett, but when they arrived at Bury St. Edmunds they dismounted and walked with their bicycles. Mrs. Langtry's appearance was striking, her figure so slight and graceful and her costume so becoming. I hear that Madame Sarah Grand generally rides in "culottes," except when she is in England, during which time she dons a skirt, so as to attract less attention. She is very fond of the wheel, but, being rather delicate, as a rule she only rides about four or five miles a day. I hear that the new incumbent of Ripley, in Surrey, has resumed the special afternoon services for cyclists that used to be so popular, but have been discontinued of late years. Mr. Tuke is himself an ardent cyclist. He is having wooden cycle-rests made in the stables of the vicarage to accommodate the bicycles of his numerous congregation, and there is also a man in charge of the machines, all this free of charge. So many cyclists arrive from London too late for the morning and return too early to wait for the evening services, that this afternoon service at 3.30 is very convenient. In summer it will be held on alternate Sundays; in winter one Sunday in every month. I hear that Mr. and Mrs. Coles-Webb are accomplished cyclists. She does not care for a skirt, but wears the rational costume. I hear that the cycling mania has obliged a well-known silversmith to enlarge his premises and add to the number of his assistants. Presents of all kinds take the form of a bicycle—elegant waist-buckles, dainty shoe-buckles, sleeve-links, scarf-pins, and brooches,



A BICYCLE GYMKHANA AT BELFAST,
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY W. J. KILPATRICK, BELFAST

on, whereas, under the new system, if the back is well supported, he has in each leg a force more than treble his own weight.

Surely, after the terrible scenes that were enacted in New York, the other day, at the conclusion of the six days' bicycle-race, we have seen the last of these prolonged time-races. Tests of strength or skill are worthy of encouragement; but when it comes to the competitors overtaxing their physical endurance to such a degree that they become absolutely raving mad, humanity revolts at the spectacle. The fact of "Teddy Hale," the Irish champion, riding more than 1900 miles in 144 hours is undoubtedly a marvellous performance; but when we are told that he and Rice, who came in second, "dismounted from their machines more than once and raved like the madmen they temporarily were," it reduces a bicycle-race to an exhibition of brutality compared with which a Spanish bull-fight appears innocent and tame. Some medical men who were present are said to have predicted that, unless the race terminated speedily, the temporary dementia of some of the riders might develop into incurable imbecility. I hope that, should a similar race be attempted on this side the Atlantic, the authorities will step in and forbid such a brutalising spectacle.

Ranelagh, about whose gaiety in days gone by one may read in Thackeray, will next season probably become as brilliant as of yore. Already the bicycle has revived it, as if it were a country inn! On recent visits to the golf course there I have found the club-house overflowing with bicycles. Many golfers go to Ranelagh on their bicycles—it is within such easy reach of town—and many cyclists who are not yet quite steady in their saddles go thither to practise in the long drives through the beautiful grounds. Recently I saw quite a bevy of fair damsels thus engaged. The addition to the club-house, by the way, is making rapid progress towards completion.

some of them in silver, some in gold set with precious stones. Even ash-trays, tobacco-boxes, match-boxes, all take the form of the wheel, not forgetting cruet-stands for our tables, and pretty mirrors to ornament our rooms. Indeed, there is no end to the adaptation of the wheel to all forms of jewellery and nicknackery.

The Bicycle Gymkhana at Belfast brought forth sixteen most skilful riders, eight young ladies and a like number of gentlemen. All wore fancy costumes, the ladies being attired in military or naval uniforms, Toreador, or Spanish dress, and the gentlemen as the Knaves of Hearts, Diamonds, Clubs, and Spades, Gondolier, Soldier, Cyclist, &c. The figures consisted of a musical ride with sixteen distinct variations—namely, single gridiron, double gridiron, outward turn, inward turn, cross, loop, dividing files, serpentine, double circle, double wheel, waist, eight, reversible, changing circle, valse, finale. Many of the figures were most difficult, and, the riding being steady and perfect, elicited rounds of applause. The Lancers in eight figures followed, also plaiting and unbraiding the May-pole by two ladies and two gentlemen; the last, being the most intricate feat, was faultlessly gone through, without a hitch. The entire performance was due to the enterprise and energy of Miss Bottomley, of Clanbrassil Cultra, County Down, who originated and organised it, designing several of the figures, and rehearsing and taking part in all on her Bayliss-Thomas "bike." Special performances took place by desire of the Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava and the Countess Annesley, who presented Miss Bottomley with a handsome gold bracelet and pearl brooch. When it is mentioned that all the riding took place, on a floor used for dancing, without a single dismount, some idea may be formed of the care and skill exercised. There was also an exhibition of trick-riding through bottles less than four feet apart, egg-and-spoon, tortoise, &c., and this was equally successful.

"THE EIDER-DOWN QUILT," AT TERRY'S.

"Sit on his head," is the advice that one hears from time to time in the streets, and possibly it was an unconscious recollection of it which caused Miss Fanny Brough to cast the eider-down quilt over Mr. Arthur Playfair and then mount this throne and remain on it "till the wriggling victim ceased to writhe." The idea really is a rather good basis for a farce, and when one complicates it by the fact that a knavish Italian waiter sees her coming out of the room of her victim, and, forming an erroneous

nobody appears intoxicated. It may be that the friendly advice, and not unsound, to do a little cutting to all the scenes, will result in a piece of awkward length, but it ought to be one of great merriment. Not only is there Miss Fanny Brough to be admired, but Mr. H. De Lange is present to give a vastly clever study of an Italian waiter. He was Italian to the tip of his tongue and to the tips of his fingers, and every gesture said "waiter," even when he was posing as a prince. As a rule, on our stage, a foreigner is presented as a sort of nondescript. Mr. De Lange, however, is really Italian at Terry's, just as he has been



MISS ETHEL MATTHEWS, WHO HAS MADE HER STAGE RENTRÉE IN "THE EIDER-DOWN QUILT," AT TERRY'S THEATRE.
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ALFRED ELLIS, UPPER BAKER STREET, N.W.

view of the case, sets to work to blackmail her, fun might well be expected. And certainly there was a good deal of fun. Miss Fanny Brough has not had so good a part for a long time, and it can easily be imagined how richly comic was her mock-tragie account of the murder which she believed she had committed. Everybody in the theatre roared with laughter at it. It seems to me a long time since we have had on the stage the situation of an old man with a young wife and a daughter unwilling to be deposed from the seat of government. Mr. Wotton uses it with a very fair amount of skill. Personally, I have a fancy for the English farce of this character, in which, thank goodness, nobody is knocked about, nobody sits on his hat, and

truly French half-a-dozen times, and was perfectly German some years ago at the St. James's, in a farce by Mr. Justin Huntly McCarthy. Playgoers are constantly regretting that they have too little of Mr. De Lange, and therefore should welcome this chance of seeing him. Mr. Playfair, new actor-manager, really acted capitally; Miss Audrey Ford showed that she has inherited no little of the gifts of her popular mother; and Miss Ethel Matthews made her reappearance in the part of a supposititious heiress.

By-the-bye, where did Mr. Wotton get the idea that "Eider-down Quilt" was a fair translation of "Édredon"? Etymologically, no doubt it is; but anybody who has passed a winter's night under one of those ridiculously small red cushions will never think of the down of the eider.

"PEERAGES" FOR THE PEOPLE.*

I find it rather difficult to approach the task of reviewing the four Peerages undernoted in a proper spirit of seriousness. I am afraid I lack the first essential of a worthy critic, sympathy. Nevertheless, I do not appreciate the presumably hostile attitude of Miggs the cobbler, and other whole-souled democrats. On the contrary, I find a Peerage almost as humorous as an essay by Mr. Austin, or a "violated domestic hearth" criticism of Ibsen by our leading dramatic critic. I confess that the first thing I did on receiving Debrett for 1897 was to ascertain if a certain gentleman still appeared as in earlier issues with the designation "Registrar of Dogs, Metropolitan Police Office, Dublin," tacked to his name. Much to my regret, I did not find the entry. Still, I was rewarded when I discovered the "Superintendent of a Cattle Farm" described as "Esquire." These, however, are trivial things.

For the Titanesque work involved in the compilation and correction of Burke, Debrett, Whittaker, and Dod for 1897 I may freely express the highest admiration. Burke and Debrett are the complement of each other. The first devotes most attention to the tracing of pedigrees proper, the second gives the fuller account of cadet branches. Burke is the more credulous, Debrett the more critical. Of all the Peerages

way; a carpenter, represented by a marquis; a bookseller's apprentice, who made a fortune as a lottery-ticket agent; a hardware dealer; and a fiddler. Some of the peers whose immediate ancestors were in comparatively humble positions possess really magnificent claims to ancestral greatness. The pedigree of Lord Halsbury is somewhat similar to that of Arthur Pendennis. The Chancellor's grandfather belonged to one of the very oldest families in the kingdom, but he was, for a time, an apothecary in Dublin. Lord Brassey's ancestors likewise belonged, for nearly eight centuries, to the "gentle" class before old Thomas Brassey's contracts produced the vast family wealth. Again, I am astonished that Lord Cairns and Lord Knutsford should be content with the meagre accounts at present appearing in Burke. Both these noblemen come of old families—Lord Knutsford particularly—and their modesty in beginning the pedigrees the one with his grandfather and the other with his father is as surprising as it is refreshing.

Misfortune has overtaken many of the families whose names are recorded. Witley Court, the old seat of the Foleys, is now the property of Lord Dudley; Wimpole Hall has passed from the Hardwicks, and Closeburn from the Kirkpatricks. A striking instance of the depths to which a noble family may sink is the case of the sixth and last Viscount Kingsland. This peer was a pot-boy in Dublin, and the original of



LADY FRANCIS HOPE (MISS MAY YOHE), AND LORD FRANCIS HOPE.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALFRED ELLIS, UPPER BAKER STREET, N.W.

Forster is, perhaps, the most accurate in the matter of pedigrees, but its able and acute editor proceeds on a system which prevents the work having a wide circulation in Mayfair. To give a couple of instances, Forster traces the descent of the present Viscount Doneraile from John Aldworth, a tanner, of Wantage, and Sir George Reresby Sitwell from a certain Jonathan Hurt, a mercer and draper in Sheffield. He is quite right, but very injudicious. The other Peerages begin the Doneraile pedigree with Sir Robert St. Leger, one of the fellow-robbers of the Conqueror, and the Sitwell tree with a vague reference to certain Norman Stutevelles. As between these lax systems, I prefer Forster's—that of tracing the male line only. Speaking from the point of view of a man who is not editor of a Peerage, I think it a mild imposition on the public that, to take a nobler case, the Duke of Northumberland should be represented to the world as the head of the Pereys, when he is really descended from "Duke Smithson," of election ballad fame, who was the great-grandson of Sir Hugh Smithson, a London apothecary.

Last year, in reviewing Debrett, I referred to the miscellaneous and almost plebeian character of the House of Lords, and gave some instances to prove my contention. I may now add to the list the descendants, in the male line, of a blacksmith—an ex-Premier, by the

Lover's "Handy Andy." He died in 1833, and his widow for many years after his death subsisted on a workhouse and charity allowance of twelve shillings and sixpence a-week and the proceeds of making shirts.

The relations between the Peerage and the Stage have been always of the most cordial character, although occasionally the profession does not receive the publicity it merits in the records. There is nothing to recall the fame of Connie Gilchrist in the bald statement that the present Earl of Orkney is married to "Constance Maedonald, daughter of David Gilchrist, Esq." Lady Francis Hope is, indeed, described in Debrett as "an actress," and by Dod as "the celebrated actress"; but Burke, perhaps in a savagely critical mood, refrains from adding this designation. Miss Ellis Jeffreys is treated in a similar manner. As the wife of the Hon. Fred Curzon, second son of Earl Howe, she figures merely as the "daughter of the late Captain Dodsworth Jeffreys, and granddaughter of Chambre Corcar, Esq., of Cor Castle, Innishannon, County Cork." It is interesting to note that the piquant little French girl, Miss (Gabrielle) Marguerite Cornille, is a granddaughter of Lord Cecil Gordon-Moore, uncle of the present Marquis of Huntly.

Without doubt, Burke and Debrett have improved wonderfully of late years. Fable has in most cases given way to fact, but there are still some pedigrees in both that require to be pruned. The two, however, are in their way remarkable, and monumental products of editorial labour and supervision. "Whittaker's Windsor Peerage" is a modest but handy little compendium, handsomely bound, and thoroughly reliable.

* "Dictionary of the Peerage and Baronetage." By Sir Bernard Burke. Edited by his Son London: Harrison and Sons.

"Debrett's Peerage, Baronetage, &c." London: Dean and Son.

"Whittaker's Windsor Peerage, &c." London: Whittaker and Co.

"Dod's Peerage, Baronetage, &c." London: Sampson Low and Co.

THE ART OF THE DAY.



ART NOTES.

A very delightful and appropriate photographic study, "Hard Times," is reproduced in these columns this week. The open ground is everywhere white with snow; and the air is charged with the vapour of the snow; along dead boughs supported by dead boughs, and among the snow itself, the birds gather in clusters, some sitting aimless but alert, others picking up their food as they can, all caught in the most natural possible positions, and yet suggesting a composed unity and an artistic picture.

You step, however, completely from this atmosphere, half art, half nature, into one wholly artistic when you turn from these living birds to the no less living bird creations of the Japanese artists, Kwason and Watanabe Seitei, whose work has been exhibited at the Japanese Gallery, a few specimens of which are also produced upon another page. It would not be easy to conceive anything, within its own limits, more exquisitely fanciful or elegant, in the best sense of the word, than Watanabe Seitei's "Flight of Storks." The birds themselves are drawn

the large number of very interesting historical facts which Mr. Strange has collected together. It is only during the last twenty years, he asserts, that such Europeans as are interested in art have gradually become alive to the fact that there has existed in Japan, for upwards of two centuries, a school of wood-cut illustration on somewhat different lines from that of their own part of the world, but often its superior in both technical and artistic results. It is this art which Mr. Strange discusses, and he has accomplished his task soundly and well.

"Kemble's Coons," a Collection of Southern Sketches, by Mr. Edward W. Kemble, is a broadly humorous and extremely diverting series of South American studies just issued by Mr. John Lane. The child studies are particularly entertaining, for although there is undoubtedly in nearly all of them just a touch of caricature, this is never so prominent or so obvious as to make the humour of the various situations depend upon the caricature. A few are quite delicious in their quaintness and arch humour. One, a child leaning over a fence, entitled, "You all ain' seen my pappy, is yer?" is altogether overwhelmingly funny, in the serious face, the indrawn mouth, and the surprised, open eyes. Not funny, but



HARD TIMES.
A PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDY BY REID, WISHAW.

with an unmerring touch, but this is not all—they are placed, posed, and poised with the rarest sense of beauty. This is "the flight as of many gold wings in the heart of the sky"; the birds are in true flight, and they join together with the gracefulness of life and the supreme accuracy of art.

It is in the art of rejection, again, that both these artists show their consummate skill. Take Kwason's "Crows on Pine Bough"; just that, and no more, which is necessary to the illusion, the four birds fading into the distance, is given to your eyes to see. The "Rook on Branch," by the same artist, is a no less sufficient illustration of the same quality, though it is here combined with an even finer sentiment of pure elegance wrought by the most delicate contrasts. It may be, indeed, that this precious and most refined manner of art might, in time, pall upon the palate by reason of its very superfluity of sweetness; there can, at any rate, be no doubt that, accepted in small quantities, this beautiful style is overpoweringly attractive to a sensitive vision.

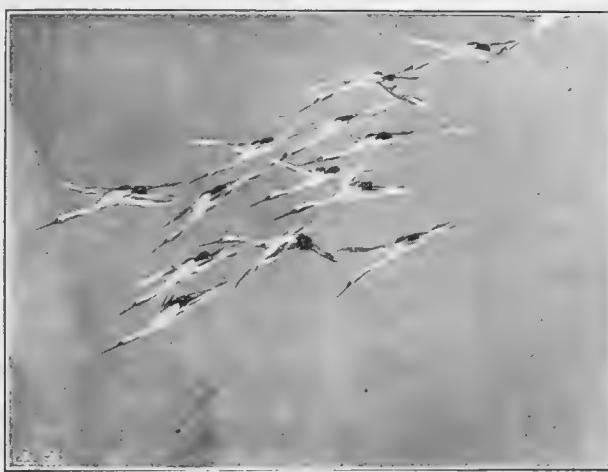
And as we are on the subject of Japanese art, here comes Mr. Edward Strange, M.J.S., pat with his book on Japanese illustration, "A History of the Arts of Wood-Cutting and Colour-Printing in Japan" (London: George Bell). There is no space here to give any account of

very tender and beautifully natural is another, a baby lying in a little wooden box on absurd wheels, a kind of primitive go-cart, called "Mammy's li'l honey boy"; and in the same category must be mentioned the gaily vital and laughing "He ain't bin borned long," a young, smiling girl holding up the baby; while "Ebenezer" is a study worthy of Murillo. There can be no doubt about the matter—Mr. Kemble's Coons are delightful.

The new volume of "The Quarto" (Virtue and Co.) contains a little apology because it has not been found practicable "to issue the second number as speedily as was originally intended," but the excellency of its contents will go far to secure a cordial acceptance of the apology. It contains some excellent illustrations, among which particular mention may be made of Rossetti's "Salutation of Beatrice," Sir John Millais' "Foolish Virgins," Mr. Joseph Pennell's "Inn Courtyard," and Mr. Watts's most beautiful "Ophelia." A very interesting account of Miss Winifred Matthews, that child of promise, accompanied by some of her really fascinating little sketches, will be read by everybody with the profound regret that so genuine a talent should have been so early laid low. Among more serious contributions to the art work of the time, the paper on "Staircases," read by Mr. T. G. Jackson, R.A., to the Art Workers' Guild, is reprinted.



WREN ON A REED.—KWASON.



FLIGHT OF STORKS.—WATANABE SEITEI.



JAVA SPARROW ON DOG-ROSE.—KWASON.



GAME BIRDS.—KWASON.



BIRD AND SNOW.—KWASON.



CROWS ON PINE BOUGH.—KWASON.



ROOK ON BRANCH.—KWASON.



A TIRED JAY.—WATANABE SEITEI.

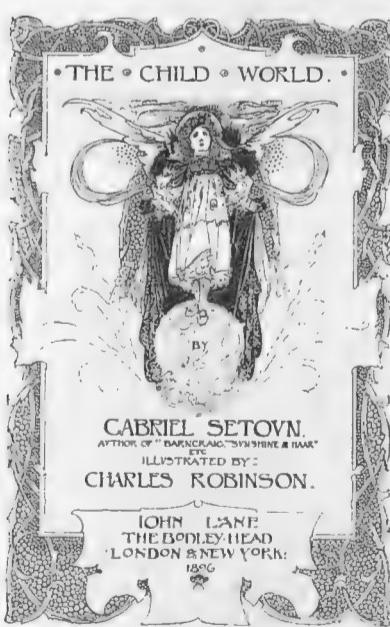
Exhibited at the Japanese Gallery, New Bond Street, W.

THE LITERATURE OF CHILD-LIFE.

Children are receiving a great deal of attention at this moment in books which they are not meant, and would not desire, to read. Their extremely subtle psychology, their rights as individuals, their independent ideals and motives of action, are being recognised, now in stories, now in essays. Mrs. Meynell is chief among such as jot down their observations in this new science in the latter form. Her latest book, "The Children" (Lane), is exquisite reading. It records the sayings and doings of young creatures when their impulses and the process of their thought were evidently different from those of grown persons under similar circumstances. Examples of these differences can be found in the homeliest intercourse with children, and the older notion was to check and twist and pull, till the sayings and doings, the processes of thought and their results, were a more or less bad imitation of those of the grown-up world. In the company of their elders, at least, it was held that children should not be frankly children, but mannikins, unless perhaps for a quarter of an hour's farcical amusement. Mrs. Meynell's child, the fruit of old personal recollections and parental watchings, is neither an angel nor a mannikin, but something with a life of its



own to be respected, and something with an infinitely tender charm. But her point of view, as that of Mr. Kenneth Graham in his wonderful revelations of child-life in "The Golden Age," has been anticipated, not merely in real life by thousands of open-minded and imaginative persons, but in literature. The new volume of "The Pageant" (Henry) contains, among many other interesting contributions, a striking paper by Mr. Edward Purcell, of Oxford, bearing the title "Of Purple Jars," and the date 1883. It is a study of the immortal story of Rosamund. There is nothing very original in revolting against the immorality, the cruelty of that tale. Every child with unperverted instincts has so revolted. But in the critical examination of the situation, and of the motives, character, and way of life of the leading characters, it is masterly, and, besides that, very amusing. "It is against Infallible Parents, and chiefly the Perfect Mother, that I would fain take up my parable," he begins. And a somewhat terrifying *exposé* of parental love and parental morality it is that Mr. Purcell gives us; but, of most of it, it may be said that it is pretty accurate and fairly true to life. "Of Purple Jars" contains many wholesomely uncomfortable suggestions for parental reflection; and it is, besides, as good a piece of writing as one could point to in the new things before us just now—written also by a staunch friend of children, one who does not think intercourse with young things must mean banter, but rather comradeship and sympathy.



very rare genius to write for children without being nauseous. But here Mr. Setoun has hardly brought talent. Not only he, but almost anyone picked out from any company whatsoever, could, of a certainty, make better. But Mr. Robinson does not seem to mind. A word, the most commonplace phrase, has been enough to set his fancies on the wing. Diverted by him, the text matters little to us.

THE LITERATURE OF OLD AGE.*

"The Jerningham Letters" distinctly belongs to the literature of old age. The first volume is made up, for the most part, of such "trivial, fond details" as could interest only, and momentarily, those to whom they were written. Sometimes you are at a loss to understand how it could be worth while to publish such a thing as this—

Yesterday, about two o'clock, going by Miss Betham's door, I looked in, and seeing her Bed Curtains half-drawn and the Cloathes all rumpled, the Room otherwise in disorder and nobody in it, I came forth in anger, and, meeting the Housemaid, told her it was shameful to neglect People in that manner and to leave Miss Betham's Room unmade at two o'clock. She declared she had done it before twelve, but that Miss Betham often laid down on her Bed, which turned out to have been the Case. How very odd!

Yet these are but excerpts from letters which have been severely edited by Mr. Egerton Castle! There is much small beer chronicled in the second volume also, but you get there occasional glimpses of people who were of as much importance to the world as any not born Jerninghams, princes, or peers, could be. Lady Jerningham mentions even, but apologetically, a visit from Coleridge—"He Came and displayed a superabundance of words; and though Certainly Clever, I think His ideas Lack behind." At the close of the letter she expresses a fear that



LADY JERNINGHAM.

From the Picture by Joseph Brown.

her correspondent will think her out of her mind for giving so much space to such a man. In another letter she gives us this characteristic glimpse of Byron—

Lady Caroline Lamb is now enamoured with Lord Byron, and has, it seems, forbore the fashionable Business of Waltzing because he disapproved of it. A few nights since, at a Ball at Lady Heathcote's, she was overheard asking Lord Byron to Let her Waltz. His reply was that it was indifferent to Him what she did, and his Last answer to a whisper was: "Then take the knife." This passed at Supper, and when the Ladies retired she went up with them into a Bed chamber, took a glass of water, and smashed it to pieces in her Hand, by which means she was very much Cut; then in a moment produced a Knife and put it up to her throat. She was, however, stopped from doing serious Mischief, and they now say She is out of her Senses.

It is with the really great of the earth, however, that these Letters have most to do. Here, for instance, is a picture of a royal wedding which recalls the "six months with oil of myrrh and six months with sweet odours" wherewith maidens prepared themselves for the competition for the hand of King Ahasuerus—

Princess Elizabeth [third daughter of George III.], tho' 48, is said to be really in love, and blushed rosily red when the Prince Hesse entered the room; they immersed him several times in a warm bath to make him a little clean; and they kept him 3 Days from smoking, which, as he smoked 5 pipes a day, was great forbearance. But, as he was married yesterday, he has probably resumed that indulgence ere now.

It is only fair to assure those who may be repelled by the inanity of the earlier letters that the interest of the volumes progressively increases, till it culminates in the exquisitely simple, natural, and affecting description, at the close of the book, of Lady Bedingfield's life in the Hammersmith Convent.

* "The Jerningham Letters." Edited, with Notes, by Egerton Castle. With Portraits. Two Vols. London: Richard Bentley and Son.

"A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU!"

Photographs by Standish and Preece, Christchurch, New Zealand



OSTRICHES IN ENGLAND.

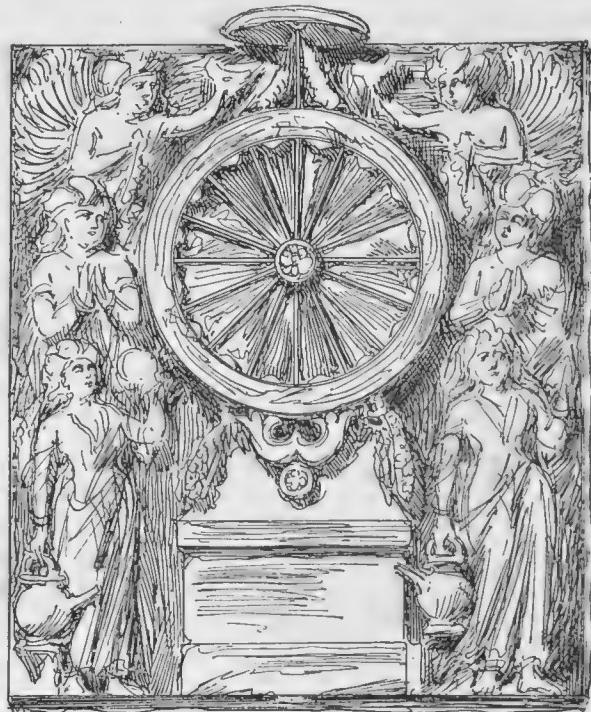
There was once an astonishing picture by Du Maurier in *Punch* representing an imaginary scene in the London streets under the auspices of the Acclimatisation Society. In this, if I remember rightly, a pair of ostriches were depicted as being harnessed and driven down Piccadilly. We have not yet quite arrived at this pitch of civilisation, though the zebra has been seen in the Park. However, an Irish lady, Mrs. Willoughby Fox, has, during the past few years, amused herself with importing a few of these birds and rearing them in Surrey. They have been brought over when quite young from Bahia Blanca, in La Plata, where there are immense numbers of ostriches in a wild state. They are somewhat smaller than their South African congeners, and do not produce such valuable plumes, though they have a mass of white feathers under their wings which are used for boas. Nor do they require the same extensive area as the Cape variety, for each specimen of which the allowance is said to be ten acres. Mrs. Fox's birds, however, are by no means insignificant fowl, and are not to be confused with the smaller bird known as the rhea. They stand about seven feet in height, and can run at the rate of twenty-five miles an hour, covering a distance of from nine to eleven feet in their ordinary stride. Their eggs are of the capacity of ten hen's eggs, and therefore each one makes a very respectable omelette. The fresh eggs sent over from South America are quite palatable, and by no means so strong as those from the Cape. The ostriches were brought from Bahia Blanca when about six months old, and apparently have thriven in the English climate; at any rate, they passed safely through the recent severe winters, being, of course, sheltered in their stables during frost. While on board ship their diet was a matter of great difficulty, corn having to be sown for them in the dark, so that they might consume the green shoots. Once on dry land, however, they regain their appetite, and live on potatoes, maize, and green food of all kinds. They consume a fair quantity of iron nails and such unconsidered trifles, and are not averse to an occasional nip of whisky-and-water. The ostriches do not attain to maturity till they are three years old, and, it seems, never acquire any remarkable amount of intelligence, though they have learnt to answer to their names, and they exhibit a decided temper of their own. They stoutly resist any liberties in the way of harnessing, one method of defeating this object being to lie on their backs and kick. They jump a very fair height, and descend opening their wings like a parachute. Their antics and attitudes, in fact, are innumerable, and they have half-a-dozen ways of sitting down. One thing, however, they do not do, is to hide their heads in the sand or its English substitute. The birds are excessively stupid in some things—for instance, in trying to get through small



apertures; and a very low railing, about three feet high, suffices to keep them within bounds, in spite of their jumping powers. They show no disposition to roam. It cannot be said that they earn their living, but they are amusing, and form a singular and attractive feature in an English landscape. With the exception of a slight hiss, they are silent, which is more than can be said of peacocks, or many other ornamental birds. It is quite possible that, as the ostriches get regularly acclimatised in England, they will develop an extra thick crop of feathers to resist the cold, and will therefore become more valuable.

“THE BUDDHIST PRAYING-WHEEL.”*

As is often sung, “The heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone.” But if he says his prayers in person, he sings his hymns by deputy. An invocation is written and put into a drum-like box, either small enough to be twirled in the hand or large enough to require a crank, a running stream, or a windmill, to turn it. The invocation, or Mantra, usually consists of the words, “Om Mani Padmé Hūm,” the



THE BUDDHIST PRAYING-WHEEL.

translation of which is, “Praise of the Jewel in the Lotus,” the jewel being probably the god emerging from the flower floating on water as the universal source of life. It is, of course, a word-charm, like Abacadabra; or the texts of Scripture on the phylacteries of the Rabbis; or the blessed “Mesopotamia,” which brought such comfort to the aged woman.

It is about these praying-, or, more correctly, praising-wheels, that Mr. Simpson discourses out of the fulness of personal knowledge. All that he says about them, and allied objects, demands attention, since he has devoted many years to the study of religious symbols in his extensive travels over the globe. Tibet is not easily entered, as we know from the difficulty of seeing or securing a Mahatma; but in 1860 Mr. Simpson crossed the jealously guarded frontier, and returned with a praying-wheel and some excellent sketches of the sacred machine in working. Then, collecting all that keen eyes could gather about the same symbol among the Brahmins (whose use of circular ornaments as part of religious rites is a prominent feature in their worship), and tracking it along Buddhist paths, as in the sculpture at Sanchi depicting the adoration of the wheel, shown in the above illustration, Mr. Simpson came to the conclusion that the origin of the symbol and its accompanying customs is traceable to primitive sun-worship. One of the strongest secondary arguments in favour of this theory is the imitation of the sun’s motion in all the rites described. To be effective, they must be performed from left to right; and if that action be reversed, the efficacy even of past good deeds is cancelled. But, of course, the primary argument rests on the worship of the powers of nature as the earliest form of religion, when heavenly things became the pattern of the earthly, and when man, in untutored wonder, saw in the solemn procession of the sky, carrying, wheel-like, sun, moon, planet, and star with it, that which he might adore, and would strive best to imitate. Not only in India, but in our own island and in Western Europe, has Mr. Simpson traced the symbolic use of the wheel in priestly rite and popular custom; and while, in the true scientific spirit, he puts forth his views tentatively, he well-nigh compels adoption of the main theory touched, whatever modification it may undergo in detail. He has written an interesting and suggestive book, and, combining in himself the happy blend of artist as well as author, has been able to point the significance of things passing under his own eye, and copied by his skilful hand.

* “The Buddhist Praying-Wheel: a Collection of Material bearing upon the Symbolism of the Wheel and Circular Movements in Custom and Religious Ritual” By William Simpson, R.I., &c. London: Macmillan and Co.



THE OSTRICH AT THE "ZOO."

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MR. GAMBIER BOLTON, F.Z.S.

HOW POOR ACTRESSES ARE BEFRIENDED.

The pantomime season is on us, and the mummers are in luck. But it is not always so with them. The great bulk of theatre and music-hall artists are engaged for only about half the year, and many not even for that short time, and for the rest of the year they are constantly engaged in looking out for work, and in this they are subject to many dangers. Invariably pretty and attractive girls, stylishly dressed, disappointment at not obtaining engagements is very liable to lead them astray, and ruin their prospects for life.

It was twenty years ago that Mr. Courthope Todd recognised the great perils to which stage girls were exposed, and, seeing that there was no provision made for this body of workers, he opened a club-room in King Street, Covent Garden, where poor actresses might call for the purpose of rest or recreation. He found it answer so successfully that shortly after he removed to larger premises, which again, in their turn, became far too small and inadequate. It was then that the idea of establishing the Macready Institute was formulated, and, chiefly owing to the exertions of Mr. Todd, sufficient money was obtained to erect the imposing house in Henrietta Street. It cost £5,600 to build and fit up.

The institution has now been flourishing for years (writes a representative of *The Sketch*), and a short chat with Mr. Alfred B. Harding, the director, shows what an immense boon the place has proved to the poor and out-of-work stage girls.

"Can you tell me briefly, Mr. Harding, the exact objects of the Macready Institute?" I asked as the first question.

"Yes; here they are: (1) To bring theatrical employees at home and abroad to a saving knowledge of Christ. (2) To encourage and help with Christian counsel and sympathy those who are striving to walk uprightly. (3) To assist deserving members, particularly in times of sickness. (4) To give requisite aid, and provide situations, where other employment is voluntarily sought. (5) To provide an institute or club open to all members of the profession."

"You must not think by this," proceeded Mr. Harding, "that the institute is a narrow or sectarian affair. Far from it. True, we encourage a Christian and proper spirit among the girls, but they are by no means coerced into it, and can, if they like, absent themselves from the meetings which are held here from time to time."

"Do you provide sleeping accommodation for the girls and ladies?"

"Oh, certainly. We have here a large number of bedrooms, which are let at a charge of from two-and-sixpence to five-and-sixpence a-week, and the average number who take advantage of these every night is from twenty to twenty-six."

"And what about the meals, Mr. Harding; are they granted on the same liberal principles?"

"Most decidedly. You see, ours is purely a benevolent institute, supported by voluntary subscriptions, and does not exist for profit. *Bond-fide* actresses can obtain a really good breakfast or tea for fourpence-halfpenny, and an equally satisfying dinner for sixpence. This is our tariff. The prices are not exorbitant, I think you'll admit. Cup of tea, 1d.; plate of bread-and-butter, 1d.; jam, 1d.; vegetables, 1d.; and a plate of meat, 3d. I can assure you quite a large number of girls come here for meals, and £6 or £7 weekly is taken for meals alone."

"What other attractions does the institute offer to poor actresses?"

"All the attractions of a club. A *bond-fide* actress can come here any time of the day free of charge for recreation and rest. We also have a library, consisting of over five hundred volumes. Not 'goody-goody' books, mind you, but standard novels and other works; while we possess a couple of pianos, an American organ, and a harmonium, all of which ladies may use whenever they like."

"Another thing I should like to mention in connection with this institution," continued Mr. Harding, "is the efforts we make to show our personal sympathy with the life and cares of the poor and disheartened stage girls. Lately I have endeavoured to get good people living in provincial towns, where travelling companies are in the habit of playing, to invite the girls or ladies of the companies to occasionally visit them, thus showing a personal interest in their well-being."

"Have you any ladies who visit girls at their own homes?"

"Yes, and to show the good we have accomplished in this way I will just quote the report which a lady, Mrs. Griffiths by name, has sent me. 'One girl,' she writes, 'I have been the means of saving from suicide, due to depression occasioned by poverty and sickness; another was on the verge of commencing a life of immorality; both these are now leading honest, virtuous, humble, and consistent lives.' Other equally striking cases might be quoted, but for the risk of their being recognised, thus causing pain to the parties concerned."

"Can you mention the names of any now famous people who once were very glad to take advantage of the Macready Institute?"

"Yes, Miss Belle Bilton (now the Countess of Clancaarty), for instance."

Provision is also made at the institute for pantomime and theatrical children, and a large play-room in the basement is devoted to these juvenile votaries of "sock and buskin." The floor is adapted for rinking, and the athletic tastes of both sexes are consulted in the trapeze and swings, which are in constant requisition. During the pantomime season one can readily tell that the morning performance is over by the rush of noisy little ones down the staircase to the children's room. A matron is specially in charge of these stage children, and both superintends and joins in their amusements. When the children reach the age of fifteen, they are drafted off to the ground-floor, with the adults, while those who do not wish to enter "the Profession" permanently are assisted with advice and help.

HORS D'OEUVRES

It is curious to think how merely conventional and arbitrary distinctions of time deceive mankind into emotions. Many really pathetic poems have been written on the death of the Old Year, and many joyful verses on the advent of the New Year. And yet what possible reason is there for attaching any special feelings to an absolutely unmeaning point of time? There is an obvious convenience in measuring time by the revolution of the earth round the sun, for, as the sun is the most important factor in producing the succession of seasons, we may expect, taking the same point of the earth's orbit for starting-place, to have pretty much the same weather at the corresponding periods of successive years, the relative positions of sun and earth being very nearly the same. But the point of the orbit from which we start is obviously arbitrary. It commemorates nothing; it is merely taken as a convenience; it is not a great festival; it is not a religious anniversary of any particular interest. We merely say that since, for purposes of utility, we measure time by the revolution of the earth round the sun, for purposes of utility we begin that period at a particular point of the orbit. Any other point would do as well, but from motives of utility most Christian civilised nations have taken the same day, so that they may be able to date events without tedious adding and subtracting. There is nothing in this to inspire poetry.

And not only is the first day of January a merely conventional date, but it is not for the average individual the beginning of a new year of his life. Unless he was born on New Year's Day, he is the same age after it as before. Yet poets talk mournfully of the poor Old Year, and preachers urge us to review our past year, and make good resolutions for the New Year, and turn over a new leaf in our lives; and moralists urge us to begin reading the Hundred Best Books so many half-hours a-day, and rise early, and eschew tobacco and alcohol, and start a diary and an account-book, and generally make ourselves virtuous and depressing. Why we should be urged to concentrate all our good resolutions on one day, I do not know; unless it is to prevent delay in executing a certain familiar paving contract. Possibly the County Council of—let us say Hades—wiser than London, likes to get all its streets done in one day.

I should suggest, as a practical measure, that on some arbitrary date—not the first day—of each quarter a man should form and execute a good resolution, paying little attention to other departments of virtue. When he has laboriously practised some desirable habit for three months, he may leave it to work alone, and start on another. Thus he will form four good habits each year, and, not improbably, one of these may become permanent. But, if a man forms many good resolutions at once, he will be like an amateur juggler with a number of plates; trying to keep all spinning together, he will smash all. And, if he forms them on New Year's Day, he will be rendered shameless in his failure by the simultaneous crash of other people's crockery around him.

The fact is that the average man—preacher, poet, moralist, or ordinary householder—has an idea that he and others can do things suddenly. Seduced, perhaps, by the associations of the pantomime season, they fix upon the conventional and arbitrary date of the first of January for a transformation-scene, when the walls of a gloomy cavern are to fall apart and reveal a giant glowing rose, with exquisite fairies poised on its petals, and the Den of the Dragon is to become the Dell of Delights. But the curtain descends, and the applauding crowd departs: the fairies come down painfully from their eminence, and go to take off their tinsel and gauze, and reappear at the stage-door as sharp and shabby girls and children, hurrying home to sup on tripe and onions. And so do those other pantomime fairies, our good resolutions, have their private transformation after the performance.

But is this altogether unfortunate? May not a man form too many good habits? A habit of any sort is a substitute for thought, enabling one to perform an act without consciously directing attention to it. That is to say, a habit enables a man's body or mind to work mechanically, without the help of his will. For so much of his life as the habit covers he is a machine, even if he is only doing what he wants to do; and if he does a habitual act without desiring it, he is the slave of the habit.

Now there is such a thing as being a slave to good habits. A person who insists on regarding everything in a serious aspect is nearly as great a bore as an incessantly flippant chatterer. The young man who reads grave books daily for certain hours to improve his mind, has not seldom improved his mind out of existence, and made his brain a mere lumber-room of useless and second-hand knowledge. The early riser will use the precious but occasionally chilly morning hours so indefatigably as to drive his hosts to madness and himself into consumption.

The proper rule for a man is to see that he does nothing for which there is no sufficient reason. He must reflect that, whatever habits he forms, circumstances may arise to make such habits inconvenient to himself or to others, and he, therefore, should never become so used to a habit, even good, that he cannot without great effort depart from it. An invalid has to live by rigid rule, under pain of growing worse; a convict is forced to live by rigid rule, as a punishment. In so far as we subject ourselves to an unbending system of habit, we are voluntary invalids, willing convicts. It is better to be good than bad; but a bad man is better than a good machine.

MARMITON.

"THE SIGN OF THE CROSS," IN NEW YORK.



MR. CHARLES DALTON AS MARCUS AND MISS LILLAH McCARTHY AS MERCIA.
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BYRON, NEW YORK.

A BOOK OF STAGE DIRECTIONS.*

The time has come, and Mr. Wilson Barrett has restored Christianity to the nations. There was a danger, mark you, that Christianity was nearing its end, and that the general disbelief foreshadowed in Revelation was gaining in a terribly ominous way with the world. But we breathe again freely. The Lyric Theatre has come to the rescue; in the enthusiastic words of the Bishop of Truro, its bringing "the nineteenth century face to face with the first" is "heroic"; and the novel which has flowed from the pen of Mr. Wilson Barrett, the literary "Sign of the Cross" supplementing the dramatic, has, for the time at least, beaten back the forces of Antichrist. Let us put on the white robe of gladness, and, reading this marvellous book, kindle—again in the Bishop's chaste language—"to whatever is pure and true and honourable." And so, when "The Sign of the Cross" reached us, we knew its kindred touch, and the story found itself at home."

"Well, well, my Marcus! What dost thou think of this?" said Nero, indicating with a broad sweep of the hand the spectacle on either side of the lake.

"I think, Cæsar," replied Marcus, "that it is worthy of a Tigellinus."

"But not of a Marcus, eh?" muttered Tigellinus.

first, did not think of marriage in her regard. "Marriage! no, by the gods!" mused he. "But this girl—how her face haunts me! What innocence! What grace!" All the customary symptoms that have been from the first century onwards made their appearance. He began "to murmur her name softly to himself"; and his heart "beat faster at the recollection." But "his flesh alone had been moved—never his soul"—so like a Superbus of the first century! You don't, however, create a Mercia to throw her away so easily as all that, and a thousand obstacles, on the part of my Tigellinus, my Berenice—a lady who "looked every inch the well-born patrician that she was"—my Poppaea, and, finally, my Cæsar himself, only added fuel to the flames that burned beneath the marble and haughty exterior of Marcus Superbus. At last he got Mercia in his power in a darkened room, and Mr. Barrett's novel might really have fallen under the frown of the whole bench of bishops (including "John Truron") if—but let me quote Mr. Barrett: "Was it a miracle that happened? The darkened room was illuminated by a soft white light." Mercia—I have ceased to quote—proceeded to inform Marcus that he could not further harm her, whereupon Marcus, amiably believing her, fell upon his knees and buried his face in his hands, the scales, in Mr. Barrett's daring phrase, having fallen from his eyes. The situation was then relieved by the entry of the



MARCUS BIDS FAREWELL TO MERCIA.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BYRON, NEW YORK.

There you are: back in a breath in the first century. For wasn't Nero an Emperor of the first century? And didn't everybody in those days call everybody else "my Marcus," or "my Glabrio," or "my Poppaea," or "my Tigellinus"? And isn't Marcus Superbus—you know the old family?—a splendidly classical name? And isn't Tigellinus mentioned somewhere in Horace—who lived, perhaps, before Nero; but there's the name anyway? Now Marcus Superbus was a man who, before Mr. Wilson Barrett began to write the first chapter of his book, had indulged himself in a thousand naughty pranks—at least, so Mr. Barrett says; but, for my part, I decline to believe him, for, from the beginning of "The Sign of the Cross" to the end, Marcus is as solemn as a prig and as austere as a Puritan; and Mr. Barrett *might* have been misled, you see, by the gossips of the first century. There was also a girl called Mercia, who was a Christian; and, for a Christian lady of the first century, she had remarkable privileges. When she "sped down the street," for example, "she appeared to skim rather than tread the ground," and to the brutal mob "she seemed a daughter of the gods rather than of earth"; and once her eyes were "shining with the fire of righteous wrath, and her lovely face alight with inspiration." So you see the sort of girl she was. Well, Marcus fell very much in love with her, but, at

preposterous Tigellinus with Cæsar's signet on his finger, commissioned to arrest Mercia on a charge of Christianity. The rest is plain sailing. Mercia, with the idea of whom Marcus had now begun to associate desires of matrimony, absolutely refused to retract, so there was nothing for Mr. Barrett save to turn Marcus into a Christian, and (let the novelist now speak for himself), "taking Mercia's dear hand in his, he turned to Tigellinus, saying, 'Return to Cæsar; tell him Christus hath triumphed. Marcus, too, is a Christian.'" There was, accordingly, shortly afterwards a smile on the face of the tiger.

Mr. Wilson Barrett, then, must pardon me if I do not take his book quite seriously. It may be well questioned—tell it not to the Bishop of Truro—whether he takes it quite seriously himself. He knows as well as anybody that this picture of manners is as like the first century as the multiplication-table; that Marcus Superbus neither did exist nor could ever have existed; that, whatever effect the pictorial development of the various scenes may have upon the stage, in the book they must lose their meaning when no attempt at characterisation is made to supply the consequent loss of colour. Nero, Poppaea, Mercia, Tigellinus, Favius, Melos, and the rest—the stage may give them substance, for there they are clothed with the actual simulation of flesh and blood; but, like Thackeray's George IV., who was nothing without his waistcoats, they, too, are nothing on the printed page.

* "The Sign of the Cross." By Wilson Barrett. London: John Macqueen.



MERCIA AT THE REVEL IN THE HOUSE OF MARCUS.

MARCUS DEFENDING MERCIA AND STEPHANUS.
PHOTOGRAPHS BY BYRON, NEW YORK.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

Among the fairy-tale collections of the year, Mrs. Clarke's "Maori Tales" (Nutt) should not be passed by. I cannot tell their work as exact folk-lore, and am less interested in that side of the question. But Mrs. Clarke is a capital story-teller, and she has had the handling of delightful matter. The Maoris were poets of the first order, very subtle, highly imaginative, and often amusing. Their English interpreter is a poet herself, and she has had the wit not to spoil the fancies of the people by any obviously European interpolations.

Perhaps English readers may be induced to extend the admiration and liking they feel for the Scottish school of fiction to a book that shares the qualities of that school at its best, but which deals with human nature on their own side of the Border. I feel doubly called on to speak highly of Mr. Keighley Snowden's "The Web of an Old Weaver" (Sampson Low), first because of my admiration for its spirit and its workmanship, and also because its unobtrusiveness might very easily hide its merits from a reader in a hurry. It is pitched in a low key. Even the tale of the killing of a keeper, the flight and hiding of the poachers, the long terror of the man who inadvertently did the deed, can hardly be called sensation, as the recollections of these events surge slowly up in an old man's mind. But this low key is not depressing. The harrowing tales of sensation among the Yorkshire hand-loom workers just before the introduction of machinery are narrated without bitterness, though suggestively enough. Indeed, the chief inward quality of the book is an extreme gentleness of so fine a kind as to be but another form of poetry, and perhaps it is this quality which compels the outward garment to so exquisite a shape. Among the books of the year, those that can compare with "The Web of an Old Weaver" for literary beauty are very few indeed. Love-scenes will ever remain a test of delicacy and essential poetry, and this test Mr. Snowden's story sustains with rare distinction.

What could be more simple, and yet have more of the fittingness and the charm of genuine poetry, than this?—

Were it for my own reading just, this chronicle should be all Elizabeth, and finish it I never could, and never would. Nay, I need never leave the sweet revealing prime of my days with her, when I was like a man that should walk for the first time in woods and fields on a spring morning, if he had never looked till then upon the world's beauty. For would he not tremble at the expanse and bright wonder of it, as I did? and would not all dim secrets of the woods amaze him—the first bare flush of bluebells, the beseeching breath of tiny violets, and all manner of pretty buds and sproutings, like to a lass's thoughts? It is plain to me that he would be near to lose his wits; and so was I.

Minor poets are too often slandered on the score of conceit. They probably have no more of that quality than minor members of Parliament. But surely they would quickly convince the world of their modesty if they could only express it as Mr. A. C. Benson does in the Envoi to his latest volume of verse. After stating that he cannot sing as sing the nightingale, the thrush, the dove, and the dauntless owl, he says—

But I can sing as sings the prudent bee,
As hour by patient hour he goes and comes,
Bearing the golden dust from tree to tree,
Labours in hope, and as he labours, hums.

Mr. Benson "hums" very pleasantly in "Lord Vyett, and Other Poems" (Lane), his verses on animals, as heretofore, being particularly charming, and by far the most original of his efforts.

Some of the notes in Mr. Henley's edition of Byron are highly interesting. Their tone is more catholic than one had looked for, and the criticism is often just and acute. He calls Jeffrey "a sound enough critic according to his lights," and praises him for making the *Edinburgh Review* the first periodical in the world. He goes on—

His chief faults as an editor were, first, a trick of mixing politics with criticism so that your Tory seldom, if ever, got fair play at his hands; and second, a tendency to be high-sniffing and superior, which prevented him from considering anybody or anything except from his own peculiar point of view, which was that of a flippant (because divinely gifted) Whig. Hence some enormous blunders, and an influence which made, on the whole, for mischief, and was not more bitterly resented than it deserved.

Mutatis mutandis—this description might serve for the portrait of another. Mr. Henley severely criticises Leigh Hunt, but he has apparently made no use of the valuable materials for the criticism of that period supplied in the careful studies of Mr. Hall Caine. Without positively denying Leigh Hunt's merits, Mr. Henley sums him up as "a person of parts, no doubt—of parts and a certain charm, and a facile, amiable, liquorish temperament." But there was no clearer, keener vision than Keats's, and I fear that Keats's word about Leigh Hunt must be remembered as the last. Keats's word about Hunt was: "In reality he is vain, egotistical, and disgusting in taste and morals. He does one harm by making fine things petty and beautiful things hateful."

Mr. G. W. Cable, the American author, has been writing enthusiastically of Mr. Barrie's visit to him. Mr. Cable says—

I have known men—men of goodness and value, all of whose ends were supposedly praiseworthy—whose whole presence reeked with the suggestion that they looked upon you and me and everyone they came near as means to their ends. In Mr. Barrie's presence this effect is totally absent. You are sure he is no more asking himself how he may utilise you than he is trying to thrust himself into your use. With a regard for your liberty nothing less than reverential, he has no more impulse to subordinate you to any pleasure or purpose of his than of unworthily subordinating himself to yours.

o. o.

VICTORIAN EXHIBITION AT EARL'S COURT.

Whatever may be the financial result of next year's Exhibition at Earl's Court, there can be no doubt that the directors have dared do all that may become a great year in our country's history. Their intentions are comprehensive, yet possible; they have secured the services of some of our greatest specialists for different committees; they are working with the strength of giants, and the energy and enthusiasm of school-boys. The huge clerical staff of the Exhibitions, Limited, is hard at its labours all day long, the directors are always in their places, while, throughout the length and breadth of England, correspondence is being directed to find out what is best in every branch of the scheme, and apply it regardless of cost or trouble. Five months, at least, must elapse before the public takes a first look-in, but the casual observer would imagine from the rate of progress that everything had to be ready within a fortnight. I paid a visit to Earl's Court during the early part of the Christmas week (writes a representative of *The Sketch*) and had a chat with several of the directors. First and foremost came Irene Kiralfy, whom I found with Mr. Austin Brereton, the newly appointed manager of the Press department. The sense of organising finds Mr. Kiralfy at his best, and I was scarcely surprised to find him thoroughly in touch with all that was going on throughout the place.

"We are going to beat our own record if we can," he said; "and there could not be a better time for us than next year. Consider the programme. There are eight sections—Fine Arts, Historical, Drama, Music, Woman's Work, Economic, Scientific, and Commercial. We have a splendid General Committee, with the Duke of Cambridge at the head, and the Marquis of Lorne, the Lord Mayor, and President of the Royal Academy as Vice-Presidents. Our eight sections, which will be exclusively British, are being looked after by the first experts of the day. Such a combination will be hard to excel even in the future."

"Will it be possible," I asked, "to make the Victorian Era Exhibition as interesting as it will be instructive? Isn't the tendency somewhat in the direction followed by our National Museums, which Englishmen are proud of and foreigners patronise?"

"In preventing such a thing," replied Mr. Kiralfy, "the art of direction is called for. Fortunately, I am able to put myself in the place of the person who comes to visit the Exhibition to see with his eyes, to judge what would please and what would tire him. A judicious arrangement of exhibits is everything. At the World's Fair in Chicago I spent a fortnight getting thoroughly round the Exhibition, never missing a day or a department. This is much too long; we want to give the public something that may be, generally speaking, comfortably viewed in four or five hours, and then those who are specially interested in a particular section can give it special time on later visits."

"I see you are giving a special section to the ladies."

"I have been working up the idea for the past six years," said Mr. Kiralfy, "and had we not had the unique opportunity afforded by her Majesty's reign, we might have had an exhibition of Woman's Work for our sole attraction. As it is, I take a deep interest in this particular section, and may tell you that my suggestions at the meetings of the Ladies' Committee have been received with great favour."

"How about the entertainment section of next year's Exhibition?" I asked. "What is to be done at the Empress Theatre?"

"At the moment, I can't tell you," was Mr. Kiralfy's answer. "I have many schemes in my mind, but have not brought any forward at present. On one thing you may rely with certainty—whatever may be done there will be new and original in every detail. We shall endeavour to have everything in keeping with the occasion, and, while showing the progress of every science, art, and invention, we shall not forget the lighter requirements of our supporters. In connection with the musical section, there will be concerts and competitions in the theatre."

When I left Mr. Kiralfy I went in search of his co-directors, and found Mr. Harold Hartley and Mr. Herman Hart discussing some point in connection with the Loan Collection with Mr. Walter Horsley, the honorary secretary of that department.

In course of the brief conversation, Mr. Hartley asked me to draw attention to the fact that the success of the forthcoming Exhibition is dependent to no small extent upon the generosity of the public in coming forward with rare and curious souvenirs of the Victorian era. "It cannot be too widely known," he said, "that we are very anxious to receive offers of the loan of interesting exhibits, that we will pay all expenses incurred in bringing them here, house them in a fireproof gallery, and insure them to their full value."

So far as one can see, London will have at least one exhibition next year worthy of the great reign it is designed to commemorate. We must all hope for a season of bright days and warm nights, of peace abroad and prosperity at home, and that, with the help of these good things, the talented and indefatigable directors of Earl's Court may reap the due reward of their labours.

AFTER BEARDSLEY.

Two lumps of black side by side,
Two eyes expressive of harm,—
Copper-plate mouth to deride,
Feet on the end of each arm;
Waist that a wasp would disown,
Simply a line, superfine;
Merely a wig and a bone—
This is a Beardsley design.

—Puck.



VANITY.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY G. WATMOUGH WEBSTER, CHESTER.

LI AND LOÏE FULLER.

Li has become fascinated with Loïe. That is the latest from China, where the veteran statesman has been favoured with Miss Fuller's footsteps. Tradition does not say whether she used the wonderful lighting effects which she had in London; but if she has, it is not surprising that the Heathen Chinese should have been lost in wonder. The last time she was in London I made notes on her brilliant "turn." When the music commenced the stage was entirely dark. Suddenly a light, dazzling as that attendant upon the Holy Grail, shot down from behind the top of the proscenium and revealed La Loïe clad entirely in white. Then the dances began. From first to last colour was the predominant effect. The measures themselves, though they implied various natural creations, were reminiscent of everything and convincing of nothing. The draperies were those of the serpentine order, but while the turn lasted there was no room for criticism. The orgie of colour was so wonderful as to leave objection mute. Light came from every side. La Loïe danced upon glass, from which the vivid splendour of the head-lights was reflected, while from wings, stage, and orchestra wonderful, luminous streams seemed to flow towards her. With the rhythm of the music the colours changed, and where the white ruled before there was a kaleidoscopic vision. Violet, orange, purple, and mauve moments succeeded in rapid succession, until a rich, deep red dominated the dancer, and she became, for one brief moment, a living rose, with palpitating heart and flying leaves. Then the hues of the rainbow came from all sides and ranged themselves upon the ever-moving draperies. Every fold had its tint and scheme of colour intensified by the surrounding darkness, until the eye could scarcely bear to look. Just as the strain was becoming almost intolerable the colours disappeared, there was a white flash of appalling brilliancy, and La Loïe faded under diaphanous drapery.

Miss Fuller has patented certain of the effects, and has the monopoly of them for the present. She has evolved the present performance from the serpentine dance, and there are many possibilities before her. Perhaps, when Mr. Edison has time, he will devote his talent—which has, after all, a theatrical tendency—to helping La Loïe to wreath electric serpents, and obtain yet more novel effects. It was with the idea of suggesting this, and thereby helping to unite the Old and New Worlds by an electric chain of peace and goodwill, that I persuaded Miss Fuller to say a few words about her past deeds and future intentions.

She was in her room at the Savoy Hotel, hard at work with correspondence, telegrams, and visitors; for her sojourn at the Palace Theatre was almost over, and an engagement at Nice was looming large upon her. Then, again, I knew all her history, which has appeared in *The Sketch*, so there was neither need nor justification for an interview. But La Loïe is a charming and unaffected little woman, and at once placed herself at the disposal of a paper of which she has pleasant recollections. "Since I saw you last," I said, "you have expanded the original scope of your work almost beyond recognition. Tell me a few facts about its progress.

How have the Lily, the Butterfly, the Rose, and the White Dance evolved, and what has given you the idea for the latest effects of lighting? They are absolutely new, and certainly very effective."

"Well, you know," said La Loïe reflectively, "I've always been working hard at the dancing since the time when I gave a little bit of serpentine almost by accident and it 'caught on' so suddenly. I've studied and practised incessantly, and yet my most popular work has come about by accident. The lighting was suggested by the sun. When the rays came into my room in the morning, while I was dressing, I used to think how fine it would be to bring some of those brilliant colours on to the stage; and when I practised by sunlight in the early summer mornings, and saw its treatment of drapery, I determined to get as close as I could. For the dances themselves I owe much of the inspiration to Paris and French audiences."

"Indeed? Will you tell me why and how they have helped you?" I asked.

"The fact is," she continued, "they are so quick in Paris to see a result, even if it is not advertised. They have the fanciful imagination that is on the alert to find an artistic surprise. An absolutely unrehearsed effect may make a performer's reputation more assuredly than all the labour of years—at least, I have found it so. The Rainbow Dance was born in the hour when an inexperienced and careless limelight-man's assistant sprinkled me with uncalled-for parti-coloured rays. I was, for the moment, astonished—almost alarmed; but the audience saw a rainbow, and I studied to keep the image before them. It was at the Folies-Bergère that the audience, seeing me whirl round with my arms up just as the fading lights announced the finale, shouted 'A Lily! A Lily!' and I then planned out a measure in which the flower should become as near a fact as may be through the medium of a dance. The Butterfly emerged from the chrysalis of a mistake, for I stopped a dance before the music, and went off with draperies taking the particular shape. You know that the long lengths of gauzy silk can be worked into almost any shape if you work hard enough," and the originator of the *Danse blanche* spoke the words with an expression that suggested her own success had not come without very hard and strenuous efforts.

"And what is your determination?" I asked her.

"I shall go right on," she replied, "working and thinking, trying for new surprises and effects. I believe that there is a lot to be done yet, and that the fresh ideas, if properly worked out, will be as popular as those I have used down to the present. At any rate, I hope so."

Since I saw her last, La Loïe has been to Nice, and conquered the natives and the visitors. She is now in China, performing her various dances on such a large scale that the expense of their

production is enormous. Some idea of the cost may be gathered from the accompanying illustration. The average dancer is satisfied with lights from the wings, and does not use direct rays from above or below. La Loïe has apparently exhausted all the possibilities of illumination, and I confess I have but one suggestion to make—I miss the X-rays of Professor Röntgen. Let her take them into her counsel, and, with just a little care, she will be able to add a Skeleton Dance to her répertoire, and so become entirely up to date.

S. L. B.



HOW THE STAGE IS LIGHTED.—LOUIS GUNNIS.

THE LIGHT SIDE OF NATURE.



Tidley. (tardy.)

There's many a thing to be seen in the ring, and the ponies that gobble a pie; but I dote on the clown
who uncovers his crown and hunts for the queer butterfly.



This is the Prince in the pantomime in love with the Princess Fairy; he calls her his beautiful queen, and yet, her name is nothing but Mary.

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A NOVEL IN A NUTSHELL.

THE GENERAL'S LAST CHANGE.

BY MALCOLM C. SALAMAN.

It was old General Brewster's time-honoured habit to empty his pockets of small change, and deposit this, together with his sovereign-purse, upon the chest of drawers next his bed, and when he did this for the last time, and died a day or two afterwards, his disconsolate widow decided that the money should be held sacred and remain for ever where the deceased had placed it, an impromptu monument to his charitable nature—for, indeed, his pocket was ever open to everyone. And when she told her friends of her resolve, they vowed it was "so sweet and morbid of her" that she was encouraged to enlarge upon the conceit. The entire room in which the General passed away was to remain exactly as it was on the day he died; the group of half-emptied medicine-bottles and the last-used glasses, with the sediment of the draught, the cup of unfinished beef-tea, the worked slippers—unfortunately not her own work, but a venerable aunt's—at the foot of the bed, which had black crape true-lovers' knots at each corner; the dressing-gown thrown over a chair, the toilet paraphernalia all ready for use, but never to be used again—everything just as *he* left it. Then, to aid the pathetic effect, on the bed the old soldier's uniform was laid out, as if his body yet filled it; the coat buttoned to the collar, the medals showing bravely on the breast, the arms spread out to form the figure of a cross—the Vicar's wife had suggested this—the trousers stretched at length, with the riding-boots at the feet, and the sword at the side, while, at the head of all, on the pillow rested the cocked hat. By this time the room, festooned with funereal crape, had become a shrine, and the widow was so pleased with the pretty background it made for her grief that, for some time after the obsequies, she would take all her visitors upstairs to show them where her husband had died, and they would note the sad relics in hushed, sympathetic voices.

There is nothing more engaging than the devotion of a young widow to the memory of a husband old enough to have been her father. During his lifetime any particularly demonstrative affection might have been considered incredible, or savouring of the maudlin; but a handsome grave-stone will excuse any excess of posthumous sentiment. Just as an eulogistic epitaph appears the more pathetic the less it was deserved, so do disparity of years and incompatibility of temperament in conjugal relations enhance the charm of the widow's grief, rendering it an absolute virtue. When one remembers how seldom one met her out in company with her old husband, one is apt to say, with a pitying sigh, regarding the depth of her mourning, "Ah, poor thing! What a lot she must have had to put up with!" His unaccommodating years, his gout, and his white hairs are remembered against him, while she is regarded as an angel of patience, and the crown of married martyrdom is hers. Now, Mrs. Brewster was of an age to realise this. A woman does not come to thirty-five without having noticed the effect producible by one of her sex under every possible circumstance, and adapting it to her own use as occasion offers. When the poor old General had been too gouty to be dragged from his home, and she had obtained a younger and more amusing escort to the "at home," the theatre, or Hurlingham, she would always manoeuvre so that the sympathy of society was with her. If ever a hostess made inquiry as to the absent General's gout, Mrs. Brewster would always deftly manage that *she* rather than her husband should come in for any casual pity. In this manner she disarmed all possible criticism of her social unconventionalities.

Of course, therefore, when the General died, and her grief was so uncontrollable that she could not bear anything but his body to be removed from the room in which he had breathed his last, her exemplary womanhood stood revealed. When, about a month later, she resumed her delightful little luncheon-parties—her grief was too new as yet for dinner-parties—there was generally a sympathetic adjournment, of those who had not previously seen it, to the "poor, dear General's room." A black-rimmed brass plate on the door gave full particulars of the deceased, his services and death, with a pious quotation; and the contrast between the bravery of the empty uniform and the helplessness of the medicine-phials was invariably voted mournfully interesting, while the sight of the General's small change on the chest of drawers would provoke platitudes on the vanity of riches, in which the wealthy relit would sigh acquiescence.

The disconsolate widow was a becoming pose, especially in Jay's most artistic confections; but Mrs. Brewster, who had certainly shown quite a pretty and ingenuous taste in manes-worship, knew the folly of overdoing anything, and realised instinctively just how disconsolate she might be without boring her acquaintance. Accordingly, when her grief was sufficiently assuaged to be permitted the consolation of theatrical matinées, *afternoon* concerts and "at homes," and small dinner-parties, she relegated to her mind the solemn duty of showing the General's room to those of her new acquaintances who were morbidly curious, and that faithful creature performed the privileged office with all the unction of an ancient guide in a historic mansion, and made a good thing out of it.

As time went on, however, the General's room was visited less and less frequently, until a kind of legendary creepiness began to invest it; and a new parlourmaid one night, hearing some boards creak in the passage leading to the room, tremblingly declared it haunted, and even

described in detail the ghost of an aged man in chain-armour, a white mantle, and clanking chains. Her fellow servants laughed incredulously at her fearsome tale, but thereafter dust was allowed to gather in the place where the General had died—dust to dust—and nobody noticed it, though, of course, Mrs. Brewster would have been very angry had she known.

When the season was at its end, and the fashionable exodus had begun, and the flight of the swallow-tail was toward the English country-house or the Continental Casino, and holiday London reached ubiquitously from Southend to Tokio, Mrs. Brewster tore herself from Lancaster Gate and took her widowed heart to Ostend, where she wore it becomingly upon her well-cut sleeve. A season at Ostend had always been her dream, but the General's gout had invariably dragged her to Aix, so that she had only been able to taste the Belgian watering-place in short, tantalising sips, so to speak. Now, however, that the gout had ceased from troubling and the General was at rest, Mrs. Brewster was determined to drink Ostend in a bumper. With her winning smile and her deep and elegant mourning, her generous purse and her pretty black-and-white bathing-costumes, she soon acquired the reputation of being the most charming widow in Ostend; but, though she permitted admiration to dawdle amusingly about her, at the least sign of amorous advance, especially in a foreign tongue, she would retire behind her widow's weeds, and touchingly describe the pathetic reliques in her domestic shrine in London. In this way she preserved an amiable and adequate feminine acquaintance. At the same time, she was sufficiently amused.

But though she proudly wore, set in gold as a brooch, the Russian bullet the General had brought home from the Crimea in his left leg, it must be admitted that with a gouty husband double her own age Mrs. Brewster's experience of matrimonial romance had been decidedly limited. Therefore, when handsome Claude Lovegrove, not long jilted by Miss Moat-Grangewell, would sit at the piano in that impressionable hour before dinner and sing De Lara and Tosti to her in the approved rhapsodic manner of the drawing-room baritone, she would allow herself to be caught in a web of sentiment, from which she would not escape till the next morning, when she saw him at disadvantage in the sea. When a woman is learning to swim, she has no admiration for any man—however attractive on dry land—who flounders in the water like herself. Claude Lovegrove had omitted to tell her that he hated bathing in the sea, and only did it for the sake of being near her under such privileged circumstances, which might have accounted flatteringly for his natatory incompetence. However, he would generally manage in the evening to sing back the illusion which the cold water of the morning had spoiled, and so win again into her good graces. And, after all, she reflected, sea-bathing is not everything; a romantic temperament, a sweet, light, baritone voice, an easy grace in cycling and in women's society, conducing to enviable popularity—all these should count for something in a man's favour. Moreover, as he was her junior by some ten years, she could afford to be fond of him in a protective kind of way; a lively young man, with an impassioned baritone, and dark, dreamy eyes, has so many temptations, and it was obviously a convenience to him to take his meals at her table. His own hotel was a den of unpunctuality, he would declare.

One evening Claude had been delighting Mrs. Brewster and her friends with a new song, in which the lyrist passionately complained of the autumn that it was not like the spring, a natural fact which, in a fine frenzy, he attributed to the inconstancy of his lady-love. The words and the melody, and the rapt gaze of the handsome young singer, had made a very sentimental impression upon Mrs. Brewster, and when, a little later, they sat together in the soft, warm moonlight, she was suddenly moved to ask why he had never married.

"Ah, well!" he said, with a long sigh, suggestive of a copious choice of reasons.

"Have you never met anyone who—?" she asked, after a silence which she had vainly expected him to break.

"Met anyone? Ah, dear lady, one meets the antitype of one's soul. One dances, cycles, bathes with her; one sings one's best to her, and one vaguely hints a yearning to do so for ever. But antitypes are apt to have sordid parents, who ask sordid questions about incomes and things. And then—there is an end."

"But are you sure she *was* the antitype of your soul?" said Mrs. Brewster, beginning to feel a little nervous.

"Dear lady, I am always sure. If I were not, my love would be a cold thing." And Claude Lovegrove said this in a manner that left no doubt in the widow's mind as to the ardent possibilities of his love-making.

She looked admiringly at his handsome head, and his perfect shirt-front glistening in the moonlight, and, noting with some satisfaction that he was wearing the very latest fashion of the smart woman's collar, it pleased her to remember that he was attractive to most women, and she thought of her old husband, and her unromantic married life. Then she said in a low, meaningful voice, "Always?"

"Always!" was the sure, deep-toned response. A thin cloud slightly shadowed the moon, and she suddenly felt his hand tenderly pressing her own, as a second "Always" was whispered quite close to her face.

"Why not?" she asked herself in a flash of thought. "I have more than enough for both." And she waited without removing her hand.

He kissed it, of course, as she had hoped he would.

"Thank you," she said quietly.

He dropped her hand petulantly.

"What's the matter?" she asked in surprise.

"Fancy saying 'Thank you' when a man passionately kisses your hand. Dear lady, you've no emotion—you are only laughing at me."

"No, dear, I'm not. You did what I wanted you to do, and I thanked you. That was all."

"It sounded a little unusual." And he took her hand again.

"But why did you kiss my hand?" she asked him. "What prompted you?"

"Obviously the moon, the stars, the murmur of the sea—love!" And he held her hand against his heart.

"Love comes last, I notice."

"Because it comes to stay." And he kissed both hands, the other having crept jealously near. "I told you I always knew."

"Your antitype? But I'm a widow."

"That's just it," he said. "There'll be no parents catechising. You'll do all that, and you couldn't ask sordid questions. But could you marry a poor man? There, now, I am asking a sordid question, am I not? But answer me, dear lady." And he drew her close to him.

"Have you forgotten the funeral shrine I told you of? Could you live in a house with *that*?" she asked, longing for him to call upon her for the great renunciation.

"The morbid has always a curious fascination for me. Besides, that weird room of yours is a revelation of character, and I adore it." And he saluted her hand with quite an old-world ceremony.

"But you would expect me to have my dead husband's things cleared away, and the room restored to life, as it were?"

"No, dear love. We will preserve your memorial chamber always. It shall be for us as the mummy at the Egyptian feast. Besides, I can always point to it as a flattering monument of my greatest conquest." And he gave her a look of proud proprietorship to underline the compliment.

"I am so glad you agree with me, dear," she said, a little disappointed.

"My wife!" And he drew her to him still closer, so close, indeed, that the lapel of his dress-coat, turning upward with the pressure, permitted the wire of his gardenia to scratch her arm.

"Oh!" She gave a little scream, drew away, and examined her arm. "Blood!"

"Dear lady!" he cried in terrified protestation. "What have I done? You're not hurt? Oh, do call me some names; I deserve it."

"It's nothing," she said; "but that's one way of caressing a woman—making her bleed! Why, Claude, you're a vampire!"—and she gave a little shuddering laugh.

"I wonder!" he said thoughtfully. "I've been most things. But you won't let that make any difference between us?"

"Silly boy!"—and she kissed him impulsively.

The moon was soft and bright; a piano near by was dreaming Chopin's Eighth Nocturne, when suddenly a volatile Café Chantant song clowned noisily through the serene romantic atmosphere.

Claude was not sorry; it was time to go to the Kursaal, and when he and Mrs. Brewster went together, she insisted, as his future wife, on lending him money to gamble with—for luck. He gracefully conceded the privilege, feeling he could not begin by opposing her wishes.

The Ostend season passed; and a quiet wedding, by special licence, in a market-town of Buckinghamshire, changed Mrs. Brewster into Mrs. Claude Lovegrove. And when Society heard of this, Society, remembering the morbid intensity of the widow's grief, merely smiled, and sapiently remarked, "Of course!"—then quickly forgot the circumstance. Apprehensive, however, that her friends, especially the late General's relatives, might not quite understand sympathetically all the subtle shades of sentiment and emotion which justified so early a change in her condition, Mrs. Lovegrove prevailed upon Claude to prolong considerably their Italian honeymoon; with the result that, by the time they returned to town and settled down in her house in Lancaster Gate, the habits of married life had already begun somewhat to stale their romance. Mrs. Lovegrove, of course, would not permit herself to realise this; indeed, she scarcely as yet suspected it, and her fondness for her handsome young husband was quite genuine—a fondness which was being constantly refreshed by the signs of admiration he inspired in other women, especially in young girls. But since she was still too shy of social opinion to resume the delightful dinner-parties which had been so great a solace to her widowhood, while yet the memory of the post-prandial visits to the deceased General's room was inconveniently recent, there was no denying that a shadow was beginning to fall upon the *tête-à-tête* dinner-table. Claude's conversation commenced to lose its nimbleness; it was no longer alert to play battledore and shuttlecock with the passing mood, seeking ever some new fantasticism of pose; no longer eager to twist a commonplacé into a compliment, or swoop with a would-be epigram upon an unsuspecting sentiment. No longer was he deliberately charming and amusing from the *hors d'œuvre* to the liqueur. It was only when he invited a man to dinner, or another woman joined them, that his humours would sport over the dishes, or his anecdotes chase each other among the wine-glasses, and his songs fill the drawing-room with the melodious spirits of rhapsodic or complaining lovers. On those evenings when he and his wife dined *tête-à-tête*, if they did not afterwards go to theatre or concert, she could rarely lure

him to the piano; but he would tenderly persuade her she was tired, and, bidding her an early good-night, he would go forth, as in his bachelor days—and nights—to the Bohemian gathering, or where he would, while she would lie awake, wondering, questioning, uneasy.

Not that she had anything definite to complain of in regard to Claude's affection; if his passion did not retain its freshness as long as hers, he was still able to infuse a reassuring tenderness into his caresses; his long, quivering kiss, which much varied practice had brought to perfection, would always prove emotive. If her psychological perspicuity would sometimes find itself puzzlingly at fault concerning him, perhaps her fondness for Claude was not lessened by the continual cause he gave her for curiosity. She was, of course, fully aware that she was a woman of much personal charm, that she knew, as few women knew, how to dress, that her means were ample, and that, from a material point of view at least, Claude should consider himself fortunate to be her husband; but she was also conscious of the fact that he was ten years her junior. Moreover, she was a second-hand wife, and she had been short-sighted enough to bring her second husband to live in a house containing a perpetual record of the grief she had displayed for the loss of her first. She now wondered what could have induced her to dress up that room in so absurdly morbid a fashion. Why did not her real friends, or those who professed to be so, prevent her doing such a foolish thing, instead of taking advantage of her widowed helplessness to encourage her grief in its monumental extravagances? They might have known that for a pretty widow of five-and-thirty there are always possibilities. Still, there it was, the dead General's room, with the memorial plate on the door, and all the morbid paraphernalia within—a perpetual shadow upon her married life. True, she never entered the room, nor was the subject ever mentioned between her and Claude since their first homecoming, when he had again insisted on no change being made; but it certainly represented the mummy at their feast.

And the dust was still gathering in the place, for among the servants it had become known as the Haunted Room, and, since the mistress herself was afraid to enter, how could they be expected to disturb the spirit of the dead with broom and duster? Of course, Mrs. Lovegrove was ignorant of this; but on a certain morning one of the housemaids came, with a white face and a fearful manner, to say she was going to leave that very day, and, on being pressed for a reason, she tremblingly told how she had "heard it again last night."

"I heard what again?" asked the bewildered Mrs. Lovegrove.

"The ghost, Mum, going in and out of the Haunted Room; and, please 'm, I've always been told that ghosts don't never only walk when something dreadful's going to happen."

"Ghosts? Haunted Room? What on earth are you talking about? There's nothing of that kind here, you silly girl!" said Mrs. Lovegrove, laughing.

"Begging your pardon, Mum, Pritchard, the last parlourmaid, saw it with her very own eyes one stormy night just before you went away and got married to your second, and she said the clanking of his chains was something horrid to 'ear."

"Pritchard must have been drinking. Now, go to your work, and let me hear no more of such stuff and nonsense," Mrs. Lovegrove said severely.

But the girl packed her boxes, and left the house that afternoon, and a mysterious uneasiness showed itself among the other servants.

Mrs. Lovegrove had never reckoned upon the possibility of a ghost-story evolving from the morbid fancy which had lent so much romantic interest to her widowhood, and now she realised that an embarrassing element was creeping into her household. That the General's room must be dismantled was certain; but this would be to outrage a sentiment which Claude had approved, and to act against his earnest wish, expressed, she was sure, out of consideration for herself, and she shrank from discussing the subject with him. What was she to do? It was a delicate problem.

A night or two after the ghost-laden housemaid had departed, Mrs. Lovegrove and Claude dined *tête-à-tête*, and he had subsequently gone to a little bachelors' party, promising he would not be late. She had retired to bed, and sleep had given her oblivion of the hours; but, suddenly waking, to find herself still alone, she was surprised to see it was three o'clock, and she began thinking how she was to conquer the difficulty of the General's room.

Presently she heard a sound as of someone moving stealthily about the silent house.

"It's Claude; how late he is!" she said to herself, as she sat up in bed, waiting for the door to open. "No; it's someone in the passage leading to the General's room. How strange!"

She jumped out of bed, threw on her dressing-gown, opened the door very quietly, and listened, then passed out.

"The General's door is open; there's someone in the room. What can it mean? I wish Claude were at home."

While she was thinking this, she was creeping noiselessly in the direction of her late husband's death-chamber. There was no light in it, other than that of the moon, but she could see the figure of a man. His back was turned to her. She stood still a moment, inclined to flight; but, with a nervous effort, she tremblingly glided in unseen at the doorway, and switched on the sudden electric light.

Startled, the man let fall a handful of coins upon the floor, and turned quickly round.

"Claude!" she cried in amazement.

"Hullo, dear! What on earth are you doing up at this time of night?" he asked in an embarrassed voice.

[This story is continued on page 409.]

DEC. 30, 1896

THE SKETCH.

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CINDERELLA UP TO DATE.



ARTIFICIAL SILK.

If our grandmothers, who were wont to pride themselves on their best silk gown—the gown which had probably formed a portion of their dowry, which was worn with due solicitude on holidays and high days only—had been told that the time would come when this same much-prized article of apparel would be manufactured from wood, common or garden timber, and not from the fairy filaments spun by the humble silkworm, they would have raised their hands in horror and held the suggestion as wicked and impious, or they would have ridiculed the



VIEW OF THE CHARDONNET SILK FACTORY, AT PRÈS DE VAUX, BESANÇON, FRANCE.

idea as a story fit for the "Arabian Nights," or evolved from the fertile imagination of a Baron Munchausen.

But we live in strange and moving times, when methods long familiar are being relegated to the limbo of archaic things, when surprises are being every day sprung upon us, and when, in quick and startling succession, come new developments of the ingenuity of man, fresh discoveries in the field of science, all making for the advancement of civilisation and contributing to the comforts of common humanity. It is certainly not going too far to say that mankind at large is immensely benefited by the cheapening of a product which, in the case of silk (on account of cost a more or less prohibited luxury), is capable of such wide utility that it will clothe and adorn at one and the same time, and serve the common purposes of everyday wear, as well as satisfy the requirements of the most dainty taste and the most exacting necessities of fashion.

The manufacture of silk from wood has been the fond dream of inventors for more years than we can tell, but how was it to be accomplished? It was left for a certain worthy Count Hilaire de Chardonnet, a graduate of the French Polytechnic School of France, and Knight of the Legion of Honour, to work out the problem and remove the question of difficulty from the sphere of the apparently impossible to the region of accomplished fact. This same Count sat, so the story goes, in an unfrequented wood, chewing the cud of thought, and at the same time munching a scrap of bark which he had stripped from one of the giants of the forest. It was now, as he carelessly masticated the bit of white rind and noticed the fibrous character of the morsel, that the first intelligent idea of a great invention filtered into his mind, and he felt that he was on the road by substitution to a real and substantial development of an industry that had hitherto been in the hands of a comparative few, and that was hampered by the cost of production. How the scheme was slowly and gradually evolved in the process of excogitation, how a method was eventually projected for procuring from such a seemingly intractable substance as wood, soft glossy yarn not distinguishable from the silk of the little worms, and capable of being woven into dress fabrics and passementeries, &c., we need not stay to inquire. The obstacles in the way of the inventor were many, and at times appeared insuperable; but by dogged, persistent thought, and endless experiment, this genius, the Count aforesaid, at length triumphed over all difficulties, and succeeded in perfecting an invention which is a marvel of mechanical and chemical ingenuity, and by means of which a

beautiful silk is obtained, equaling in brilliancy and fineness and softness of texture that made in the mysterious laboratory of the unlovely grub.

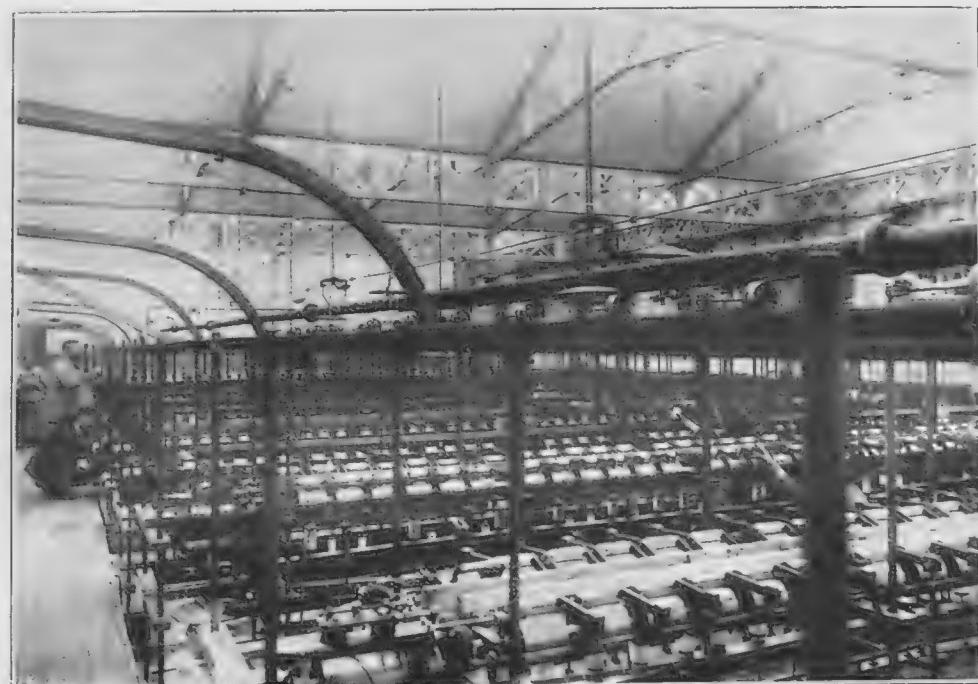
In 1891, Count Hilaire de Chardonnet founded a company to work his invention, and the enterprise has proved a great commercial success. Of course this success was not achieved all at once; the process needed perfecting, and towards this end a number of chemists and eminent engineers have contributed. A flourishing industry in the manufacture of artificial silk is now established in France, and at the works at Besançon some two hundred kilos of silk are made daily, of a quality said to be so superior that it rivals the best products of China and Japan; but the demand has grown so enormously that it is necessary to enlarge and duplicate the works, for the output from this factory alone is at no distant date expected to reach eight to twelve hundred kilos of silk per diem.

The process by which the pulp is converted into silk yarn is, as might be supposed, exceedingly interesting. At the works at Besançon the labour of twelve thousand glass silkworms is utilised, the said glass silkworms being little fractions of glass tubes, of which the lower extremity has a capillary opening through which passes, by the action of powerful pressure, a liquid matter, which is nitro-cellulose, in the form of a special collodion. This is transformed into a filament of silk scarcely perceptible, and serves to constitute the final thread.

To show how infinitely fine these filaments are, it is only necessary to state that no fewer than ten of them would be required to make up the thickness of a human hair. These almost invisible filaments, forced through the orifices of the tubes under pneumatic pressure, are taken in hand by nimble-fingered girls and passed through the guides and on to the bobbin, so many filaments being passed on to one bobbin according to the thickness of the thread required. After being spun, the silk needs to be denitrified, so as to render it non-inflammable after the chemical process it has undergone. Finally, the hanks are placed on two revolving rollers, which stretch and also iron them, producing that high degree of lustre which is a notable feature of the

artificial silk. This, in brief, is a description of the process employed in the manufacture of the new silk.

The illustrations which accompany this article give a general view of the Chardonnet Silk Factory at Près de Vaux, Besançon, France, and also views of some of the principal departments. Près de Vaux is an attractive suburb of Besançon, and it will be seen that the works cover a considerable area of ground. Here, as we have already intimated, some twelve thousand glass silkworms are utilised, the output running into about two hundred kilos of silk a-day. The spinning department is most interesting, the skill of the girls in attaching the almost invisible fibres to the guides being only acquired after considerable practice. The twisting department is a sight in itself, and the spectacle of thousands of bobbins rapidly revolving in the operation of twisting the fairy-like yarn is well worth seeing. The doubling and skeining department is devoted to the final operation in the manufacture of the silk. Two other views show respectively the finishing, sorting, and packing department, and a large room in which a number of women



THE TWISTING DEPARTMENT.

are engaged in the making of the artificial silkworms, which, as we have observed, are small fractions of glass tubes. In the machine-rooms there is much costly machinery, including four steam motors with two boilers, a dynamo and battery for 400 lamps, air-pumps, which give in special accumulators a pressure of 100 kilos, hydraulic pumps, and centrifugal pumps, which can give 5000 litres of water per minute. All the buildings are substantially built of iron and stone, and are lighted throughout by electricity generated upon the premises.

For some time past artificial silk has been sold in London, and it is among the leading features of this season's Paris novelties. So extensive has grown the demand for this beautiful commodity that the existing

shareholders' expense. If ever it be safe to prophesy before the event, then this is undeniably one of those occasions, for failure seems impossible and success guaranteed.

Artificial silk is, as we have already said, in every respect similar in appearance to the natural commodity in all the essential qualities by which the latter is distinguished. It takes dye readily, and the process is both simple and inexpensive. It has been woven in this country in combination with wool, with cotton, and with silk, and the materials manufactured from it are strikingly beautiful in finish and appearance; moreover, they can be sold at prices very much lower than real silk, and still leave a substantial profit. It will, doubtless, soon be largely employed in many branches of our English silk manufactures—for ribbons, dress goods, quilts, furniture coverings, sashes, handkerchiefs, tie silks, church decorations, vestments, and innumerable other purposes.

The making in this country of silk from wood-pulp is bound to prove a successful, extensive, and highly lucrative undertaking, and an industry that will supply employment to thousands.

To Mr. Robert Martin Houldsworth belongs the credit of introducing this new and valuable industry into England. Having made every possible inquiry, and satisfied himself by repeated visits to France as to the practicability of the Count Hilaire de Chardonnet's patents, he at once attempted to negotiate their purchase. This was a task that required great tact in its accomplishment, and just on a year passed ere he was in a position to acquaint his friends of success.

Anyone who has seen the exquisite textures and beautifully soft fabrics classed under the name of artificial silk must bear witness as to the national benefit of the introduction of such an invention and the initiation of a new industry into England—an industry providing labour and excellent pay to thousands (the silk imported into England last year represented in actual money value seventeen and a-half millions, as I have already intimated), and an industry which must in the usual order of things be a credit to

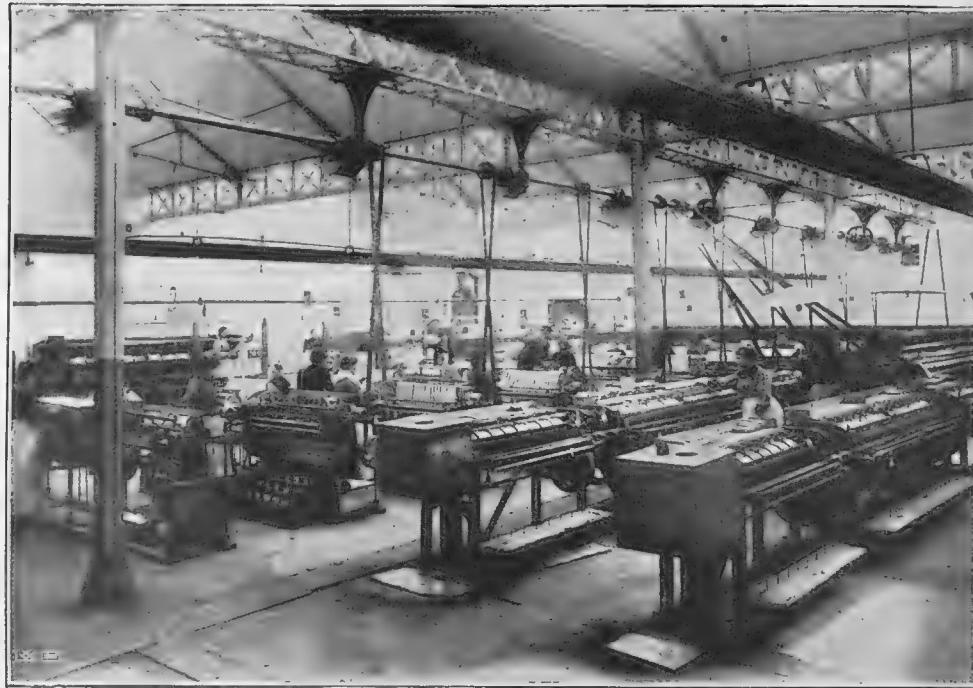
all concerned. For this, if nothing more, Mr. Houldsworth deserves our most sincere thanks.

Little has hitherto been done, for the time has been short, but extensive works, covering something like fifteen acres of land, are, as I have already intimated, in course of erection and equipment. Yorkshire, and indeed every county, will in turn benefit by the artificial silk industry, for there is no reason why it should not be produced by every shire and county.

The demand is already far beyond the capacity of the Coventry works, and the whirr of the loom will bring happiness to many, in the outcome of Mr. Houldsworth's pluck and perseverance.

But Mr. Houldsworth's scheme is by no means complete. He not only intends working the American and other patents, but to secure the actual monopoly of these unique inventions throughout the world, and is even now devoting the whole of his time and energy to the fulfilment of a scheme which strikes one with admiration *in excelsis*.

GILBERT D. SUTHERLAND.



THE DOUBLING AND SKEINING DEPARTMENT.

powers of manufacture are entirely unable to cope with it, and the idea has now occurred to a number of enterprising and well-known silk and cotton manufacturers in this country of adding to the number of our industries by introducing the making of artificial silk into England. This will be good news for all, seeing that the commercial prosperity of many counties has been seriously menaced of late. It must be remembered that the Lancashire and other weavers can give their French congeners points as regards skill in textile labour, so that the making of artificial silk will be an occupation specially suited to them.

Most advantageous concessions have been secured; a company has been formed, and a factory, which will cost £30,000, is being built at Brandon, near Coventry, for the manufacture of artificial silk yarn from wood-pulp. It has been stipulated by the new company that Continental makers of the artificial silk shall not send their yarn to England, while the international patent laws, now that the rights for Great Britain have been bought up, will ensure that in future neither the yarn nor the goods manufactured therefrom shall be imported here. Thus the industry, though originating in France, has become essentially British, and the bugbear of foreign competition has not to be contended with. According to the Board of Trade returns, the value of the materials manufactured from natural silk and imported into Great Britain during 1895 was £15,237,651, and that of the raw and thrown silk imported into and manufactured in Great Britain was only £1,883,872, or a total of £17,126,000.

These enormous figures show what grand prospects are before the English company, and extensive profits must necessarily also accrue to the American and other companies, and it is safe to predict that, once operations are commenced in earnest, much of the capital now sent abroad for the purchase of silk and silk goods will be distributed among our homeland workers. Manufacturers in Coventry, Macclesfield, and in Lancashire have already been supplied with small quantities of the silk, and in turn have given large orders to the English company, which will for some time keep the new works fully employed.

We do not know of a more hopeful undertaking, and one in which there is so small an element of doubt—if, indeed, any doubt as to the success of the speculation can be said really to exist; for it must be borne in mind that the silk to be manufactured is not an untried invention, nor one of which the practical value has to be proved at the



THE FILTERING AND RESERVOIR ROOM.

(Continued from page 404)

"Waiting for you. What are you doing here?"

"Don't ask me; don't ask me."

"But Claude, dear, what does this mean? You keep away from me all night, and then at three o'clock in the morning I find you in *this* room, of all places, groping among my former—among General Brewster's things, without even a light!"

"The moon was sufficient for my purpose," he answered mysteriously.

"Your purpose?" A suspicion glimmered through her perplexity. "Have the servants been saying anything?"

"The servants? Saying anything?"

"Oh, some silly ghost nonsense they have concocted about this room," she said pettishly.

"Ghost-story! Ah! Well, I've solved the mystery, at all events," he said slowly and enigmatically.

"Mystery? There is no mystery," and she gave a little, irritable laugh.

"No longer," he said in tremulous tones, "for I have seen the ghost."

"Claude, my dear boy, where have you been to-night?" she asked with some show of concern.

"I've been watching, and I've discovered—the ghost. *Yourself!*" He spoke sepulchrally.

"What do you mean?"

"You leave your bed at dead of night, and come, in white flowing gown, lighted only by the moon, to the death-chamber of your first husband!"

"Claude!" she cried in utter astonishment.

They were standing on either side of the bed. He pointed to the laid-out uniform.

"It only wants the body here," he said. "You come, I suppose, to meet the spirit. Perhaps it is hovering between us now, impatient for me to be gone."

"Oh, Claude, Claude, what are you saying? Why didn't you let me dismantle this room when I wanted to? I always feared it would cause some unpleasantness, some misunderstanding between us. But you insisted."

"I didn't realise all *this*," he said, pointing to the black crape festoon on the walls; "and this, and these"—indicating the uniform and the medicine-bottles.

"And all this has driven you out—away from me—night after night? Well," she said energetically, "it shall do so no longer. It shall all be changed." And therewith she began vigorously to tear down the crape hangings, and she took up the old General's bemedalled coat and his trousers, shook them, and threw them one over the other on to a chair, and the dust of many months that had gathered thickly about these things, being so rudely disturbed, filled the atmosphere as with a cloud.

"To dust thou shalt return! The spirit of the dead is departing," Claude impressively exclaimed, as he beat the dust away with his extended hands.

"How strange you are, Claude! But this shall all be cleared away to-morrow," she said. "Everything in this room shall be new and bright and different. There shall no longer be any shadow of the past between us. I had no idea you felt like this. Now, dear, let's go to bed."

She came to him, and took his hand. There was a loud knocking and ringing at the front door. Both were startled.

"Who can that be, at this hour?" she said, clutching Claude's arm in some trepidation.

"I can't imagine," he said. "Perhaps I'd better go and see. You're not expecting any friendly ghost to look in, are you?" He was going towards the door. "Oh, by Jove!" he suddenly exclaimed with a laugh, "it must be my cabman. I'd forgotten all about him. I say, dear, have you any change? I couldn't pay him, because I was quite cleaned out."

"Again, Claude? What was that money you dropped as I came in—there on the floor?" Then, glancing at the chest of drawers, she said, "Why, it must be the poor old General's last small change."

"Really? Then, of course, I couldn't borrow it for my cab-fare."

"Won't you take it from me?" She stooped, and picked up some of the coins. "There, I have no other change."

"Then I suppose I must. But only half-a-crown—that'll be enough," he said deprecatingly.

"But the cab must have been waiting hours!"

"Not ten minutes—" He looked blankly at her surprised expression. "I mean—I forgot—" And he ran downstairs.

"Just come home, then," she said to herself. "Was it only the General's small change he wanted, after all?" But she kept this question to herself.

The General's room is changed beyond all recognition. It is at present Claude's chapel-of-ease, where he comfortably worships himself. But he and his wife see plenty of society together now, and she is as happy as most wives with husbands years younger than themselves.

NOTE.

The Sketch will be on sale in the UNITED STATES, at the offices of the International News Company, 83 and 85, Duane Street, New York; and in AUSTRALASIA, by Messrs. Gordon and Gotch, at Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Perth, W.A.; Christchurch, Wellington, Auckland, and Dunedin, New Zealand.

IN A GRASS COUNTRY.

It is an ideal hunting morning—the cloudy sky that oft-quoted poet demanded, and lightest of south-westerly airs which he would have asked had the exigencies of metre permitted; the smoke-trail from the passing express lingers low and long after the train—sure indication of a good scenting day. The meet at the Cross Roads is the largest we have had this season; two hundred and fifty horsemen and horsewomen, at least, a quarter of a mile of carriages, and a dozen or two of cyclists. Every class is represented, from the man in immaculate pink on his three-hundred-guinea hunter to the working farmer in tweed and leggings, who is making a "fox-catcher" of that retriever-coated youngster he bestrides.

Ten minutes' "law" for late-comers, and the Master gives the word to move. What is the first draw?—Kingthorn Wood. That's good; Kingthorn is a covert which rarely fails to furnish a fox, and if it holds to-day, it is Lombard Street to a China orange that we see sport. Away we go at a dog-trot, hounds leading—a long procession of horse, foot, and wheels—up the miry lane. It is a perfect country that unfolds before us as we top the gentle rise; an undulating chess-board of great pastures, with here and there a copse, or spinney, and fences big but possible.

Now a brief halt, and the crowd presses on us from behind, whence comes the sounds of unpleasantness. "War' kicker!" then the hollow drum of hoofs on barrel, a squeal and clatter. "Why don't you stick a ribbon on his tail, sir?" "Look out!" "Back him into the hedge, sir!" and "Brute like that in a crowd like this!" in indignant undertones from all sides. Do not, I pray you, bring a kicker out with hounds; but if necessity compels, at least spend twopence on half a yard of red ribbon, a danger-signal for the adorning of his tail. But there goes the pack, across the field to our left, with Jim the Huntsman in the midst. That is Kingthorn Wood on the slope below us, and you will agree with me it's as "foxy-looking" a covert as there is in the shires. We will pull up here, and if the fox breaks away on this side it will be hard luck if we don't get away on good terms with hounds.

"Eleu-in! Eleu-Eleu-in! Cover hoick! Cover hoick!" and at a wave of Jim's cap the twenty couple of beauties are into the covert. "Yoi, wind 'um! Yoi-oi-oi, wind 'um, then!" What a voice Jim has! "An excellent thing in a huntsman," to misquote old Quarles (it was Quarles, wasn't it?). Now silence for a minute, broken by the stamp of restless hoofs and the champ and jingle of bits. Eh? Didn't you hear—Yes!—No!—Yes, it was a whimper! Told you so; that's a challenge, and no mistake. There again, another hound, and another. There's a crash of music! Is there any music on earth like the cry of twenty couple of hounds speaking to a fox? only one thing could beat it—the music of forty couple. There he goes! See him stealing away, pointing for the best line of country straight-necked fox could choose. Hold up your hat; don't halloo: all right, Jim knows he is away, and here come hounds, a streaming torrent of white and tan and black, in full chorus. "Ta-a-a-leo awa-a-ay!" screams Jim, and touches his horn; "Ta-a-a-a-leo awa-a-a-ay!!" Give them time, give them time. Let them settle to his line; give— Oh, come on! Keep your wits about you, for you want them in a crowd like this, charging down a slope with a big black bullfinch in front. Choose your own line, mark a place where you see daylight through the growers, and hold his head straight. Just feel the bit when you're twenty lengths away: the good horse cocks his ears, shortens his stride, and—a crash of rustling twigs and over. How the hounds are racing! Come along! That hedge has strained the field, and only a score of us are with hounds. What glorious going it is on this turf! and the fence on the far side wouldn't stop a lame baby. Over, and we are thundering down another big pasture, where the cattle huddle and eye us fearfully as we pass; through an open gate and down the long slope to the ribbon of water through which hounds are splashing. Drive him at it! Over, but its treacherous, boggy banks have brought two good men to grief; now the ground is spongy, and we must take a pull, though it goes to one's heart when hounds on our left-front are racing on a breast-high scent. Up the firmer turf of the rise beyond, over a stiff stake and bound, and away again across a fifty-acre field, where we can let our nags go. A ticklish jump into a deep lane, a rattle "on the hard" for a furlong, a gate, and a civil shepherd to open it, and grass again. That is a rare stout fox hounds have before them. War' wire! There's a strand running through that hedge. Gate? There in the corner; but you need not hurry now, for hounds have thrown up their heads on the plough on the other side. They can't feel scent over fresh-turned earth, and I don't mind confessing that I'm glad of the check. Here comes Harry, his coat showing he has been down. "The brook, was it?" "No, a rabbit-hole, but no harm done." He takes his hounds, lifts them forward, and they hit off the line under the further hedgerow, racing away again with a burst of music. More big fields and big fences; then hounds a field or two ahead swing right-handed, and a line of open gates, good for tiring horses, lets us creep up on them. What does that ploughboy say? Fox only half a field in front of hounds, and crawling. Come up, old chap, you must do this gate, no time to open it. Over with a thundering rap and a heavy stumble, but we are up with the pack to see the end. Hounds have caught a view, and are running for blood, the gallant old fox just in front, dead-beat. Will he reach the next hedge? No! they are into him. Snap, snarl, then scuffle and worry. Jim is up and off his horse, to wade among the pack and hold the fox, stiff as a board, over his head. "Whoop! my boys, whoo-oo! Tear 'um and eat 'um, then! Tear 'um and eat 'um!" All over. Twenty-seven minutes from find to finish, and only that one check.

THE WORLD OF SPORT.

FOOTBALL.

Already it grows clear that the England teams against the minor countries, at any rate, will contain a very fair share of the amateur—that is to say, the Corinthian—element. After opening very weakly with a loss to St. Bernard's, Mr. N. L. Jackson's famous combination have accomplished some really splendid performances in the defeat of Sunderland and the Bolton Wanderers, and in drawing with Aston Villa and Sheffield United.

I heard it stated the other day, in the way of casual remark, that G. O. Smith would be fifty per cent. better than he is now if he were to figure regularly in a professional combination. I am not quite so sure about this. Playing an occasional friendly match against a League club is not like figuring continually week after week in that tournament. Smith is by no means a big man, and the heavy charging, to go no further, indigenous to League matches, would probably act as a check to the brilliance of the old Oxford captain.

Smith is certain of his cap this year against Ireland, Wales, and Scotland. Were he not so magnificent a player, one would be inclined to call Smith lucky, inasmuch as there is no competition against him for the position. It is indeed remarkable, when you come to think of it, the smallness of the number of fair centre-forwards among the professionals. Of course, Campbell, of Aston Villa, and Cameron, of Everton, are good men, but they happen to be Scotsmen. At one time I had an idea that J. H. Gettins, of the Millwall Athletic, would run Smith close, but we were subsequently able to clearly see that Gettins is not in the same class with Smith.

Smith, Lodge, and Oakley will, I suppose, be England's quota from the Corinthians for the Scotland match, for at present I do not see that the Corinthians can be called upon for any other player for the greatest match of the year. I would like to point out, however, the vast difference there is between playing in Scotland and playing at the Crystal Palace, at which place the match has been arranged for next April. Southerners may be depended upon to show up at their best before many thousands of their own supporters. At Parkhead last season there was scarcely a solitary cheer for the Englishmen. The goal that they scored was greeted with a chilling silence that might have been cut.

Talking about Southerners reminds me that they have very little to grumble at as the result of the draw for the first round proper of the Association Cup. It has been a standing joke—though hitherto Southerners have failed to see the humour of it—how the metropolitan clubs have consistently failed to get into the second round. These clubs, however, have in the past been treated to the worst of luck, and time after time had to go away into the North and Midlands to play the League clubs. For that matter, the winners of Division 9 and 10, whoever they may be—I fancy Luton and Millwall—are this season called upon to entertain West Bromwich Albion and the Wolverhampton Wanderers respectively. Both are, of course, famous cup-fighters, and the Wanderers, in addition, are the present runners-up for the Cup. Notwithstanding, I fully expect to see one or other of the Southern clubs companion Southampton St. Mary's in the second round. St. Mary's have the lightest task of all, for not only will they be on their own ground, but they have quite a second- or third-rate team to beat.

CRICKET.

I have heard it stated in a tone of regret that the absence of the Australian cricketers from England during the ensuing summer would tend to render the cricket season less successful than was that of 1896. I fail to see the logic of this contention.

When the idea of the visit of the Australians last season was mooted, I pointed out the evil effects that would be felt by the counties engaged in the championship. The harm was much greater than might have been supposed, for it led to a rupture between those fine sporting counties, Lancashire and Yorkshire, owing to the refusal of the White Rose to agree as usual to set aside the two Bank Holidays as the dates of the matches.

I had hoped that next year, with the Australians away, Yorkshire and Lancashire would have gone back to the old system, and played on Whit-Monday and August Bank Holiday. But it is not to be, and as Yorkshire are to play Warwickshire on those dates, it may be taken that both the Roses will suffer.

I am glad, however, to see that the county to benefit is Warwickshire, one of the newly promoted clubs. Warwickshire is a good team, rather short of bowling, but reliable with the bat, and full of enthusiasm and pluck. No better or more amusing demonstration of this can be afforded than in the fact that the record score compiled by Yorkshire at Edgbaston last season was printed by a local enthusiast on silk, and copies were sold at a shilling a time. Perhaps the Warwickshire people thought that this would prove a fine testimonial to the excellence of their wickets.

The decision of the Gloucestershire County Cricket Club to award the Middlesex match as a benefit to F. G. Roberts, their veteran bowler, is a very popular move. Roberts has practically dropped out of first-class cricket as a regular player, but we old ones do not forget the services of the burly old professional to the county of the Graces.

Roberts belonged to a stock school of bowlers, a school which contains Pickett of Essex (also to be awarded a benefit next season) and

Porter of Derbyshire. He is a medium to fast bowler, with a bumpy ball, and though he has never been brilliant, he has been better than that—he has been always steady. Roberts is rather out of date now, but his "actual" retirement is, I am sure, not yet at hand. *OLYMPIAN.*

RACING NOTES BY CAPTAIN COE.

The extraordinary in-and-out running seen this season up to now under National Hunt Rules is not easily to be explained. In the case of fat horses we do not expect them to win, but why animals trained to the minute should lose when defeat is thought to be impossible and, a day or two afterwards, win when they are not fancied by the public, is simply inexplicable. I am told that several big starting-price jobs have already been successfully worked this winter over horses that have previously run badly. Perhaps the National Hunt Committee would do well for the future to ask for the production of betting-books when horses run in and out.

The public generally benefit by competition, and it must be owned that sportsmen who prefer lounging at their clubs to going the racing circuit at this season of the year have to thank the "battle of the Tapes" for getting information from the course much smarter than was the case in the old days of monopolies. Now, no sooner is the result for one race received than the runners for the succeeding event on the programme come to hand, and, in the matter of results, I am told that as much as five pounds per day is paid to get these by telephone from some of the meetings. Truly we live in a fast age.

It is considered the correct thing in racing circles to send Christmas cards and New Year's greetings to friends and acquaintances; and some are very nicely got up in owners' colours, not forgetting the horse-shoe that always plays such a prominent part where the stable is concerned. This reminds me that some of our trainers are highly superstitious, and they never miss a chance of nailing a horse-shoe (when picked up) to the stable-door. A trainer who had had a run of bad luck was told that matters would not improve until he bought a goat to roam his stables. "Billy" was duly purchased, and, strange to relate, winners began to come one after another.

The list of officials who have received licences from the Jockey Club for 1897 contains some good old sporting names and sporting families. In point of numbers the Fords, Frails, and I'Ansons run a dead-heat for first place, four of each family finding favour in official eyes. Manchester, Nottingham, and Lincoln are the chief meetings with which the Fords are identified, and between them they hold posts of clerk of the course, clerk of the scales, handicapper, judge, starter, and stake-holder. The same can be written of the Frails, who, although they act at no really great meeting, know all that requires to be known in the government of courses. The I'Ansons are a Northern family whose traditions show that the sporting instinct has ever been apparent. Then there are two Verrals (the oldest family connected with racing, not even excepting the Weatherbys), two Tophams, two Smiths, two Sheldons, two Shaws, two Pratts, two Mannings, and two Hornbys. So it will be seen that, if "family" has no weight with the authorities of the Jockey Club, at any rate it is no bar.

We are so used to not seeing the names of members of the National Hunt Committee as nominators to races under their control that it was with something like surprise I noticed Lord W. Beresford running a horse at Lingfield. The fact that the animal was tailed off in common company does not matter; a member of the National Hunt Committee was taking an active part in the sport he helps to govern. And of only a very few can this be written. The Prince of Wales has not supported chasing for some years now, and the majority of his colleagues share his absence. There are somewhere about half a hundred members, and seventy-five per cent. of them are either too lackadaisical to run horses, or consider the sport beneath their contempt. Can it be wondered at that loose practices prevail? What is wanted is a governing body composed of men with the best interests of the sport at heart, to inquire into and require an explanation of any proceeding that is not entirely above suspicion.

One of the "places" Messrs. Asquith and Bigham, along with a big Bench, were trying to define last week is Tattersall's Ring—one of the most remarkable "places" in the world. In reality the ring is just the rail-enclosed ground where "good" men bet, men whose knowledge of Welshing may be likened to that of the new-born babe. But all those who have transactions there must be included in the term "ring." And they are a strange collection of humanity—probably the most extraordinary that ever did congregate. Any day may there be seen men who look as though they were breaking their last shilling, and yet who in reality dabble in hundreds and thousands on a nod of the head. This nod is sufficient to seal a commercial bond which is scarce ever broken. It is a deal, and the code of honour that obtains at Tattersall's says it must be settled. To describe this place a Dickens would be required. The mannerisms of the bookmakers alone would form the foundation for an interesting book, and the peculiarities of the other habitués would make a remarkable superstructure.

OUR LADIES' PAGES.

NEW YEAR REDIVIVUS.

Old Father Christmas is dead and done for. Those lordly carcases and barons of beef; those uncrowned and unknighted, though curly-horned, Southdowns hanging in serried ranks from the shop-fronts of prosperous butchers; groves of red and green holly; thickets of mistletoe, sacred no more, though symbolical ever; entrenchments of oranges; regiments

of stiff and stark turkeys; geese—ye gods! where, indeed, did the geese begin and end? Not only at the poulters, verily. Yet it is all over and done for, this annual carnival of feasting, festivity, and family parties, while the New Year is upon us—a blank, unwritten page, over which the record of another calendar in the few we are each allotted will begin to inscribe itself to-morrow or after.

As a rule, one likes to begin the New Year well, starting in peace with all neighbours—not excepting those next door—goodwill even towards unfortunate creditors, and charity to the world in general (editors included). Of the sliding-scale on which these most excellent foundations are poised—I will not say laid—it is but fair to say nothing. To begin well is everything, and with Jan. 1 in such evident evidence, it were unfair to recall past failures and root up the dry bones of last year's rosy-complexioned resolutions. Enough that the time is at hand in which to gird ourselves anew and look life in the face once more. A trouble-

PALE GREEN PEAU-DE-SOIE WITH VELVET ROSETTES.

some business, too, this rising up out of the seemingly inevitable. It seems so much easier to drift. But the after-glow of effort is one of its chiefest consolations, as those who, *par exemple*, remain faithful to the cold tub even in December can at least testify, not to mention extraneous advantages.

But this is frivolous, although unintentionally, for, look you, with a pen attuned to Honiton or homespun, as the case may be, a homily must seem misplaced, and so I had perforce better dispose myself to enthusing over the enchantments of a certain corn-coloured frock, here set down *in petto*, than seek to sound the soundless depths of other matters, which are, in truth, after all, but a trifle deeper than the depths of womanly vanities. All the same, this frock is lovely, and I defy any brunette not to partake of its subtle fascinations. It is a Paquin gown fresh from the creative faculties of that potential authority, who is on his way across Channel to presently court the favour of *les Anglais* in Dover Street itself. China crêpe, being a "high novelty" with milliners of note this season, has been used with white-mirror velvet in this gown, which throws up its beautifully soft yellow, so skilfully draped over a satin of similar shade. The skirt, gathered all round the waist, is set forth at edge with a handsome insertion of Belgian lace, which is edged with a narrow-gathered ruche of yellow lace. The bodice, cut square in front, is charmingly set off with a quite short bolero of white velvet, embroidered with turquoise beads and silver cord, while wide and very pointed lapels give it a distinguishing *chic* from other forms of this popular addition to our evening-gown. Short sleeves, slightly draped, are of the velvet also, and a turquoise satin waistband, made high and softly folded, accords daintily with the corn-colour and square berthe of lace, against which a spray of yellow flags contrasts with most engaging results. The back view has been chosen for illustration, as giving the "set" of the bolero, which must not be too long. As an accessory, turquoise is greatly in favour at present, for, though taken *en bloc*, its vivid green-blue can be attempted but by the few, in touches here and there, or suggestions, as Worth calls it, the colour is entirely becoming to fair or dark women, and this is a great consideration.

As an instance, the Grand Duchess Vladimir has had a cloak sent her

from Paris this week in which turquoise is employed with great subtlety and effect. It is one of those large black satin mantles entirely covering the dress beneath, bordered with chinchilla, lined with pale lemon satin, and loose enough to be comfortable, with wide pleat at back, yet giving the effect of a tight-fitting garment. But then the Duchess is slender, and the maker an artist. Returning to my touch of turquoise, which appears seductively in lapels trimmed with a frill, to emphasise their tone, there is also to be admired a cape of the black satin, cut in square indentations and thickly powdered with turquoise, gold paillettes, and cut jet, which, appearing above the lapels, much enhances their effect. This cloak cost some two hundred guineas, but a quite satisfactory prototype might be arranged for twenty, more appropriate to the average type of taxpayer.

Miss Paget's wedding on Monday was naturally an occasion of the utmost gaiety in gowns, and the brilliant velvets—orange, ruby, violet, and so forth—with which we gorgeously attire ourselves this season, made a very rich and beautiful effect, eking out with their accompanying laces and fur trimmings. Lady Beatrix Taylor made a picturesque figure in violet velvet with chinchilla furnishings, and a black velvet picture-hat; Lady Settrington's dainty face was set off by the most Parisian of toques; Lady Henry Nevill wore a cardinal-red gown, well suited to her Spanish type; Mrs. Adrian Hope, in a fancifully made costume of green velvet, white satin, and gold, made, as she always does, a most decorative effect; and Lady Romney, charming in grey velvet, cut steel, and flame-like points of orange, was another noticeable figure.

Dancing comes so much into the evening programme at present that I am illustrating a second ball-frock of particular prettiness, the delicate tones of which should be extremely sympathetic to the clear-complexioned brunette, pale green satin of the faintest, loveliest tone being its basis. The skirt opens at each side to show smart frillings of ivory lace, and a further embellishment takes the form of baby-velvet ribbon rosettes, composed of differently shaded mauves. A low, square-cut corsage is alluringly draped with green China crêpe, just a tiny morsel deeper in tone than the satin. Over it a wide, pointed collar, of ivory Duchesse lace, on which tiny gold spangles follow the pattern, makes a *distingué* last touch, as real lace always must. Rosettes of the shaded narrow velvet nestle prettily at one side, giving the effect of violet posies, only that these are, if possible, prettier.

Some of the plainer felt hats at present in vogue are extremely coquettish and becoming. They seem more in favour abroad than here, where we are still dominated by elaborations in flowers, feathers, and velvet well enough in the afternoon, but overpoweringly overdressed before lunch.

As an example of the simpler style, I may quote a quite too entirely ravishing silver-grey felt in the Mousquetaire style; its brim, lined with white felt, turns up with large, loose flaps at the side; a rather flat crown is trimmed all around with grey ibis feathers, which rise in a soft and differently shaded grey cluster at one side. This hat has been sent up from Cannes by a thoughtful friend, and is quite the nicest Christmas-box one could possibly have received. I wonder the Mousquetaire is not more domesticated among well-dressed folk here. To me it seems an ideal morning-hat.

An original winter cycling-gown has just been sent over by a French tailor for a very smart and sporting noble lady whose paces are equally an admiration to the yokels round her Shropshire lanes as the gay folk with which her hospitable house is always filled at this season. It is the bodice that, in this instance, cries aloud for admiration, the skirt of blue serge being merely a clever combination of knickerbockers and



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SMART GOWN OF STRAW-COLOURED CHINA CRÊPE.

well-placed divided drapery. This—meaning the bodice—is *en blouse*, with four wide pleats on each side. Its back, tight and seamless, is trimmed from centre to neck with bands of mohair braid, coming to a point in the middle. Similar treatment applies to the shoulders, and the sleeves, made all in one piece, are draped above, and close-fitting from elbow to wrist. An upright collar of chinchilla at both sides lies down or stands up as desired; inside it the standing collar is made from a red and yellow bandanna handkerchief, which knots loosely in front. The bodice is interlined with a fine blue flannel, and is warm enough to go in coldest weather without a top garment.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

LADY E.—If you are vowed to drab cloth, I should certainly brighten it by the addition of another colour. How would you like a bodice with six horizontal pleats of violet velvet, edged with bias green velvet, embroidered in gold and black, the bolero of drab cloth edged with sable sleeves of the same? It breaks up the drab colour, but is merely a suggestion taken from a new Worth gown belonging to a friend. If I were you, I should go for your own and your daughter's bridesmaids' frocks to Madame Humble, of Conduit Street. She is full of original ideas, and carries them out with the utmost success. You cannot do better. I think it will be apparent to you, on reflection, that a reply to your second question does not come within my province on this paper. You should address yourself to those who are professionally fitted to advise on such subjects.

DIANA (Leicestershire).—I am amused at your letter. There are, as you say, a good many who must neutralise expensive tastes with small economies. A clever maid is a host in herself. For your riding-boots use Oxford and Cambridge Cream. It applies to all patent-leather. The white sort keeps it up to the mark when new; the black furbishes it up miraculously when a bit worn, as your woman will find. For your brown leather there is a brown Cambridge Cream, which brings it out new after the hardest moor- or bog-trotting. Do not allow your Phyllis to use much. The golden secret of boot-polishing is that the most brilliant results follow a small application of cream and a great application of elbow.

SYBIL.

"THE CIRCUS GIRL'S" GOWNS.

I have just been making the acquaintance of the latest "girl" at the Gaiety, and, indeed, the new arrival is even more fascinating than her predecessors, while her own gowns, and the dresses of her companions generally, are a positive delight to the feminine eye. The first scene, on the Boulevards, introduces us to the four serpentine-dancers of the circus troupe, whose everyday attire is very striking—to wit, Princess gowns of corded silk, with yokes and epaulettes of black velvet outlined with the same soft, white feather-trimming which borders the skirts, and furthermore elaborated with a bold appliquéd design in silk matching the colour of each gown, one of which is in pale mauve, another in yellow, a third in grey, and the last in pink. Big hats of grey felt, turned up at the left side with coloured rosettes, and trimmed with clusters of ostrich-tips and touches of black satin, complete the costume. Then there is pretty little Katie Seymour of the dancing feet, gowned in pale mauve, which matches the Neapolitan violets massed together on her white hat, while Miss Connie Ediss, as the wife of the circus proprietor, is gorgeous in a grey cloth riding-costume, lined with cerise satin, and with capes and vest of the same vivid colour.

The Circus Girl herself—Miss Ethel Haydon—wears a riding-habit of violet velvet, caught up at the waist, the coat-bodice, too, being arranged with a vest of white and gold, while white ostrich feathers adorn her big hat.

Girl students in black skirts and loose coat-bodices of olive-green velvet, bicyclists in mauve cloth coats and tight-fitting knickerbockers, and delightful *blanchisseuses* in rose-pink alpaca, with exquisitely goffered collars and cuffs of spotless whiteness, and dainty little aprons

of black silk, all help to swell the throng and make a most effective stage-picture, while some Parisian dames of high degree are also represented. One wears a mauve silk gown, patterned with a tiny check in black and white, the bodice fastened in double-breasted fashion with a pleated frill of white satin, embroidered with gold sequins. Here the lining is of eau-de-Nil silk, and a pure white gown, made in severely simple style, to accord with the demure charm of the wearer's sleek golden hair, is brightened by a lining of turquoise blue. An electric blue bengaline reveals glimpses of salmon-pink, and a pale pink alpaca deepens into rosiest red inside, while a very pretty coat-and-skirt costume of leaf-green alpaca, the sailor-collar outlined with a frill of white accordion-pleated chiffon, has tea-rose yellow silk for its lining.

And I can assure you that the attention bestowed upon the linings is well repaid, when, in the pretty "rainy-day" song, skirts as well as umbrellas are daintily uplifted.

Then these all give place to bewitching Ellaline Terriss as the heroine Dora Wemyss, who looks lovelier than ever, inasmuch as on this occasion she has been gowned by Jay. She wears a skirt of fine scarlet cloth, short enough to show her dainty shoes—for Dora is only a school-girl—and well contrasted with the snowy purity of her blouse bodice of white Irish lace over cloudy white chiffon. It fastens at the left side with three enamel and diamond buttons, and a bordering frill of white accordion-pleated chiffon over another of scarlet, and the same pretty finish is given to the little epaulettes which relieve the shirred tightness of the sleeves. Furthermore, she wears a quaint scarlet toque, with a group of white wings arranged with infinite art in front, and the most delightfully *chic* little cape of the scarlet cloth, softened by revers of lace.

But she has an equally lovely evening-gown in the next act, when we are taken behind the scenes in the circus. It is of white silk, accordion-pleated, and veiled with white lisso, the baby bodice being gathered softly round the pretty shoulders, and eventually drawn into a waistband of white satin finished with long sash-ends. The transparent sleeves of the lisso reach to the wrist, and there finish with a soft frill, and for sole ornament Dora wears a long, fine chain of gold, reaching below her waist, and with a great golden heart attached, while just a suggestion of colour is given by the spray of La France roses which she carries in her hand. Their delicate colouring is repeated in the satin of her long cloak, accordion-pleated from neck to hem, and, with its ruffled collar and little shoulder-capes softened by an edging of chiffon, nothing could be more ideally simple and lovely.

Here, too, comes "La Favorita"—Miss Ethel Haydon—in short skirts of gauzy black, and a satin bodice where the vest of moonlight-blue is embroidered with iridescent sequins, and finished with true-lovers' knots, which encircle the slender waist; her maid (Miss Grace Palotta) looking piquant in a short skirt of tender green patterned with pale pink blossoms, and a bodice of deep violet velvet, with dainty accessories in the shape of coquettish cap and apron.

Finally, there is the artists' ball—a superb scene where a small army of Pierrots and Pierrettes show the infinite possibilities of a combination of black and white, with here and there a touch of pink introduced. When I tell you that, in common with a number of their colleagues, they were dressed by Alias, you will understand that every novel and ingenious effect imaginable has been utilised for their benefit. For the rest, there is a positive revel of colour, headed by two red-white-and-blue dancers, both of whom are more than common tall. One girl has a blue satin skirt lined with scarlet, and a bodice of blue-and-white striped satin bedecked with cornflowers, while huge streamers of blue satin float from her white mob-cap, the other dress being in red lined with blue, the flowers used for its trimming being poppies.

A "pansy" dress is an exquisite harmony of colour, the bodice, of golden yellow, melting into the pale mauve of the skirt, which is festooned with chiffon in an indescribable shade of blue, stolen from the flower itself. Pansy-petals of many colourings form the sleeves, and others are set like a halo round the golden head of the pretty wearer, while two giant flowers are fastened one on the centre of the corsage and the other on the skirt. Equally lovely is a "Sappho" dress of blush-rose pink satin, with transparent draperies of tender-yellow chiffon, bordered with a shower of rose-petals in the two colours, while knots of black ribbon-velvet on the shoulders and long black gloves add considerably to the effect, and a great butterfly is poised in the airy chiffon head-dress.

Miss Ethel Haydon looks at her loveliest in a charming Watteau dress of white silk, striped narrowly with green and brocaded with little pink roses, the pretty flowers themselves doing duty as trimming for both the gown and the Leghorn hat, in company with green ribbons and lace. And Miss Terriss is the sweetest of Quaker maidens, in a tender-grey gown, with its white collar fastened by one snow-white gardenia and its glossy green leaves, and with half-sleeves, apron, and cap of equal purity. She carries a long cloak of grey accordion-pleated cashmere, and it is so arranged that for some considerable time the delicate colouring of her gown is contrasted with the vivid orange hue of Mr. Farkas's suit. Indeed, the whole scheme of colour has been so carefully thought out that the result is perfection, and everyone allows that the dresses form one of the principal attractions of "The Circus Girl" who is dowered with so many charms.

FLORENCE.

There was a man in our town,
And he was wondrous wise;
But, falling on the "Brier-Bush,"
He cried out both his eyes. —Judge.



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MISS ELLALINE TERRISS IN "THE CIRCUS GIRL."

the left side to disclose a lining of white being arranged with a vest of white and feathers adorn her big hat.

Girl students in black skirts and loose coat-bodices of olive-green velvet, bicyclists in mauve cloth coats and tight-fitting knickerbockers, and delightful *blanchisseuses* in rose-pink alpaca, with exquisitely goffered collars and cuffs of spotless whiteness, and dainty little aprons

CITY NOTES.

The next Settlement begins on Jan. 12.

THE MONEY MARKET.

When the year opened the Bank rate stood at 2 per cent., a figure that had ruled since February 1894, and the market had become so accustomed to that level that it was regarded as a permanency. Month after month passed, and yet no change in the Bank rate occurred, a fact that confirmed this opinion in the minds of everybody, and when there set in a demand for gold in the autumn on United States' account, there was no display of public interest. The outflow became heavier and heavier, for the rush of American produce to the seaboard was phenomenal, and a powerful syndicate, headed by the Morgan and Rothschild houses, was doing all it could to depress New York exchange; but despite the drain of bullion across the Atlantic, there was no apprehension of dearer money in London; so large was the stock of gold in the Bank of England. It, therefore, came quite as a shock, after two and a-half years of 2 per cent. to find the Bank rate raised to 2½ per cent. on Sept. 10, to 3 per cent. on Sept. 24, and to 4 per cent. on Oct. 22. There has been difficulty, however, in maintaining rates in Lombard Street after the American gold demand was stopped, and markets have now shaken off their apprehensions. Consols have been almost 114 as the highest, and are now—just after a dividend deduction of ¼—nearly 111.

HOME RAILS.

The Home Railway Market commenced the year under very favourable auspices. The dividends for the second half of 1895 were, in almost every case, beyond the best expectations, although an exception must be made in the case of the Scotch group, whose distributions were not quite so satisfactory as had been estimated. During the period that has elapsed since the commencement of 1896, circumstances have been, on the whole, very satisfactory. There have been times when open warfare between the great corporations and their employees seemed inevitable, but, happily, trouble has so far been averted. There have been threats of labour disputes in the North, but the activity that has prevailed in the centres of industry involved has brought about a desire on the part of the masters to make sacrifices rather than to imperil their prospects, and there has been no indication as yet of an unreasonable spirit on the part of the men. There can be no doubt that the spirit of discontent was fanned into a flame by the injudicious action of the executive of the London and North-Western, but the outburst was subdued, mainly by the timely action of the Board of Trade, and, although the questions at issue have not yet reached the stage of settlement, there is now no real ground for anxiety. The course of prices was naturally affected to a very considerable extent by the advance in money rates, but the set-back caused by the action of the directors of the Bank of England in August has been altogether nullified by the advance that securities of this class have made in the estimation of the investing public, and by the improved prospects which the expansion of trade have opened up. For instance, Great Westerns, at the commencement of the year, were quoted at 159½, they are now 174½; Brums were 186½, they are now 202; Midlands were 154½, while to-day they stand at 168½; and Berwicks, which started the year at 163½, are 178½. The foregoing quotations are confined to the "Heavy" group, but the advance has not been confined to these stocks. Scotch descriptions have naturally benefited by the remarkable increase of activity that has manifested itself during the year. Coras started 1896 at 52, they stand now at 59½; British Deferred stood at 40½, and is now quoted at 46½. Southern stocks have moved in the same direction, for, while at the close of last year Berthas were 176½, the current quotation is 184½, and Dover "A," starting at 86½, stands at 105½. These results must be gratifying in the highest degree to the investors who were content to wait while the horizon was clouded, and who have now seen an abundant return on their capital. One of the most important developments that has taken place during the year has been the advance recorded in regard to the matter of stock splitting. The Midland has acted as the pioneer, and the Glasgow and South-Western has, during the past few days, come in as a good second. Rumours have been current with regard to other companies, but, so far as can be gathered at present, the policy that is being pursued is one of remarkable conservatism. One feature that cannot be overlooked is the proposal that was advanced in the autumn for the formation of "District Deep Levels," but the incidents connected with the project are too recent to need recapitulation in these columns. Another item which must call forth sincere regret on the part of those interested in railway matters has been the retirement of Mr. Samuel Laing from the chairmanship of the Brighton Line—a circumstance that has occasioned widespread regret, and one that is by no means the least notable incident in the railway history of 1896.

AMERICAN RAILS.

There has been very little vitality during the year in the Yankee section, but, on the whole, prices close well above the figures that ruled at the end of last year. For instance, Milwaukees are about 10 dollars higher, Louisvilles 8 dollars, Denver Preferred 2 dollars, and so on; but the improvement has been attained by a series of feverish fluctuations, and not by any steady appreciation. The year opened with the American Market in a demoralised condition, on account of the President's Venezuelan Message. By the end of February this scare had passed away, but in March the Cuban question cropped up, and this has continued to be a factor until the present moment, culminating in

Mr. Cleveland's Message to Congress this month, wherein he declined to recognise the insurgents as belligerents, but told Spain that there must be a limit to the war; and in the joint resolution of a Committee of the two Houses of Congress, declaring in favour of Cuban independence, although this is disavowed by the President and Executive. The most important incident of the year, however, has been the Presidential Election. This began to be an important unsettling influence as early as May, and its effect became gradually the more pronounced. At first the markets were rendered nervous by the apparently large support being given to Mr. Bryan, the Democratic and Free Silver candidate; but presently it came to be realised that the odds were much in favour of Mr. McKinley, the Republican and Sound Money nominee, with the result that prices recovered sharply. When the Election came on, early in November, it was found that Mr. McKinley had been chosen as next President with an overwhelming majority, and the market was greatly strengthened. Subsequently there has been less buoyancy because of the fears of gold exports from New York, now that confidence is restored and gold-hoarding has ceased. At the end of summer and the beginning of autumn there was a very striking inflow of gold into the United States, partly owing to the rushing forward of produce to Europe, partly to the action of a powerful banking syndicate which manipulated exchange, and partly to the desire of the American people to get gold at all hazards, lest a silver basis should be adopted. With the election, all these abnormal conditions passed away, and the tendency of the gold current is now in an outward direction from New York. The year has been very satisfactory in one important respect—namely, that it has seen completed the reorganisation of almost all the bankrupt roads known on this side. The only one unreconstructed and unassessed of the derelict group is the Union Pacific; but, unfortunately, another has been added by the unexpected collapse of the Baltimore and Ohio. There has been one rate-war in the South and South-West during the year, but otherwise the United States has kept wonderfully clear of disturbances, and there has been a decided all-round improvement in commercial conditions.

FOREIGNERS.

The year opened with a political scare which affected many departments of the Foreign Market, especially those which were directly connected either with North or South America. The Message of President Cleveland, followed as it was by the news of the failure of Dr. Jameson's raid, combined to depress the markets, while the doubtful outlook in Asia Minor and the unfavourable developments in Abyssinia and Cuba were reflected by a downward movement in Turkish, Italian, and Spanish issues. South American stocks were on the whole dull, and this was especially the case with Brazilians, which were influenced by the friction that had arisen between that republic and Italy and Great Britain. After such an inauspicious opening, we may feel some gratitude to find that things are not worse than they appear to be at the close of the year. The Venezuelan difficulty has been cleared away. Italy, after a series of disasters, has curbed her lust for African expansion, and is not likely to waste more money and men in that quarter for some time to come. The Turkish difficulty remains, it is true, almost as unsettled as it was at the commencement of the year, but there is more accord between the Powers than existed twelve months ago, and this, it is to be hoped, will eventually lead to a solution of a most intricate question. Spain, is, perhaps, the only European country except Turkey which has distinctly lost ground during the year. Her troubles in Cuba have not been surmounted, in spite of lavish expenditure on armaments, and the hostile feeling existing between her and the United States has been accentuated rather than not, while recently she has found fresh work for her already overtaxed powers in the Philippine Islands. Under the circumstances, and considering that it has been found impossible to float a new Spanish External loan during the year, it is surprising that Spanish Four per Cents should have fallen no more than a point on balance since the commencement of the period. Italians, on the other hand, have improved more than seven points during the twelve months, though the rise, in our opinion, is scarcely justified, and is due mainly to manipulation in Paris, where the stock is controlled. Turks are also better all round on balance, and here also it is difficult to justify the advance. Turning to South American issues, we are pleased to note a substantial improvement in Argentine stocks, which is amply warranted by the better financial and commercial conditions of the country. Uruguays, on the other hand, are a shade lower than at the commencement of the year, as are also Brazilians. On the whole, however, the Foreign department of the market has stood its ground remarkably well in the face of many adverse circumstances. With the brighter political outlook for the new year, and the continuance of good trade, which there is sound reason to expect, we may hope that it will continue to hold its own, although some stocks, especially Italians and Spanish, we cannot help regarding as overpriced at the current quotations.

COLONIAL AND FOREIGN RAILS.

There are one or two salient features which stand out in the Colonial and Foreign Railway Market. Take first the two great Canadian railways, the Grand Trunk and the Canadian Pacific. Both these lines have been struggling with great difficulties, but both during the latter part of the year have shown a tendency to improve their receipts. As regards Trunks, however, we do not find that the improvement is reflected in the quotations, which, on the whole, are slightly under those ruling in January last, for it is recognised that the progress made is not sufficient to check much the growth of the burthens which the company is piling up on its back. Canadian Pacifics, however, stand

some five dollars higher than they were quoted at a year ago; but, in spite of that, we are afraid that the financial condition of the company has not made any very substantial improvement in the interval. On the whole, the year has been a good one for the Indian Railways, the famine and short crops notwithstanding, and the steady growth of the passenger traffic of these lines affords a good guarantee for their further progress. The substantial rise that has taken place in many of the Argentine Railway stocks is quite justified by excellent traffic returns and by the general prosperity of the country. Mexican Rails have also advanced considerably, the First Preference of this company being now about 12 points higher than at the commencement of the year. The activity in Mexican trade and the renewal of the pooling arrangement between the railways, sufficiently account for this advance. A bad feature of the year has been the decline in Nitrate Rails. Opening the twelvemonth at about 12, they have fallen steadily, until now they can be bought at below 5. When it is remembered that less than two years ago these shares were quoted at over 20, the fall is extraordinary. Still, it must be considered justified, for, under existing conditions, it is difficult to see how the company can do more than pay its debenture interest during the coming twelve months. This company and the two Canadian railways form the chief exceptions in a year which has, taking them altogether, proved a favourable one for Colonial and Foreign Rails, thereby reflecting the general improvement that has taken place in the world's trade.

Mining Market.

The opening of the year will not readily be forgotten by holders of Mining securities. The disastrous Jameson raid, the hasty action of the German Emperor, the Venezuela troubles, and the complications in the East, constituted a highly charged political atmosphere. And, so serious has been the effect of the slump that, throughout the year, the Market cannot be said to have recovered from the shock. Throughout the crisis a few financiers, like Messrs. J. B. Robinson and Barnato, fortunately remained cool, and, having avoided implication in the aggressive Uitlander movement, were subsequently able to considerably relieve the tension existing between the Transvaal Government and the mining industry. The year that commenced in such gloomy fashion has thus drawn to a close in a far more peaceful manner, but the effects in the Mining Market are still felt. Political troubles were the genesis of the disasters of the year, and have dogged its steps during its course. Rumours of Boer designs against the suzerainty, the severities of the laws relating to the Transvaal press and aliens, these and similar matters have afforded material for political scares that have tended to check any rally of prices. The enormous amount of shares compulsorily thrown on the market, or taken over by the various financing houses, have also helped to repress any advance. The wonder is that, on the whole, prices have been so well maintained, and that genuine holders have held so tenaciously to their shares. To the last-named fact may, indeed, be attributed the present steadiness of prices; but, in spite of these favourable influences, many shares are lower at the present moment than was the case during the height of the political scare at this time last year. To select only a few leading securities, we may mention that Chartered stood at $4\frac{1}{2}$ on Dec. 30, 1895; East Rands were quoted at $4\frac{1}{2}$; Goldfields' Ordinary $10\frac{1}{2}$; and Johannesburg Consolidated Investments $2\frac{1}{2}$. From these representative securities it will be seen that during the year there has been a very considerable set-back. Unfortunately, the raid was not the only evil with which the Kaffir Circus was forced to contend. The labour difficulty soon became acute, rumours as to the unsatisfactory outlook for the deep-level properties followed, and, finally, it was whispered that troubles with the natives were imminent in Rhodesia. Later still, the rinderpest outbreak spread to the Transvaal and caused serious mischief. Following the Matabele outbreak, a long period of semi-stagnation then set in. Paris became more and more an unsatisfactory factor in the market, liquidations of accounts were no longer able to be deferred, and the holdings of weak operators were perforce taken over by the leading financial houses on both sides the Channel. As a result, the latter were unable to render much support to the market. Rumours, however, were industriously circulated, apparently with the cognisance, if not at the instigation, of the big firms involved, that combinations were being formed to raise quotations. As a result, there was in the early autumn a period of renewed interest in Kaffir mines. The opportunity, however, was taken to liquidate a considerable number of weak accounts, and it soon became evident that the financial houses were merely acting in their own interest. As a result, another period of stagnation set in, during which, from time to time, political canards, such as the reported indemnity demand, were started with a view to banging prices. The result is seen in the present low level of quotations, although at the time of writing, such is the tenacity with which shares have been held, that, with improved political conditions, many are disposed to look for better times. The West Australian Market, during the year, has shown a disposition to stand upon its own basis independently of movements in Kaffirs. Despite adverse rumours regarding leading properties, the energy of the West Australian Government, the discovery of water in considerable quantities, and the opening of the railway to Coolgardie, caused a considerable rally in the spring. Indeed, during June the West Australian Market enjoyed what was quite a little "boom." It proved, however, to be short-lived. As is only natural in a new field, mines highly praised and shares of which were standing at big prices proved to be mediocre if not absolute fiascoes. A nervous feeling was engendered, and the over-promotion did not aid matters. The result was a smart break later

on, accompanied by organised "bear" raids, and as the financial support in this market was never very strong, the slump was severely felt. Indians continued somewhat quiet all through the year; a little interest was spasmodically aroused, but, considering the strong position of many of the companies, the shares were strangely neglected. An attempt was, however, made to "boom" New Zealand shares, and these efforts met with considerable success. In fact, the New Zealand Market has come very decidedly into favour during 1896. British Columbian mining has also been discussed, but most of the interest in the concerns of this colony is centred in Canada and the States. As, however, several South African financiers have engaged themselves in enterprises for opening up this country, we shall probably hear more of the matter later on.

INDUSTRIALS.

The Market in Industrial securities has undergone a notable change during the year. The public demand for shares of this class has been almost insatiable, and the result is shown not only by the marked appreciation that has taken place in the quotations of old-established favourites, but by the enormous number of undertakings that have been converted into limited liability companies. The most conspicuous feature in this department has been provided by the cycle industry, which during the past twelve months has absorbed many millions of public capital. In this connection it is impossible to overlook the part played by Mr. Ernest Terah Hooley, who was prominently associated with the flotation of the Dunlop Tyre Company, and a number of other enterprises of a kindred character. The passage of the Motor-Car Act has naturally attracted a considerable amount of attention to the possibilities opened up in the direction of petroleum and electric-car traction, and if the movement seems to hang fire somewhat, it is certainly not due to the lack of enterprise on the part of company promoters. The most notable effort in this direction has, of course, been the creation of the British Motor Syndicate under the auspices of Mr. Harry J. Lawson. Breweries, both English and American, have had a very considerable share of public attention. The former have undoubtedly advanced in popular favour, and the appetite for holdings of this class has been followed by a material advance in the shares of the leading companies. In addition, there has been a large increase in the ranks, owing to the conversion of businesses engaged in the industry into public companies. Barclay, Perkins, and Co. is, of course, the chief instance in this movement. The position of American breweries has altered considerably during the year; those having Chicago for the centre of operations have emerged from the famous "beer war," and, as a rule, are now doing extremely well, while the New York group is suffering not a little from the operations of the Raines Law, which hampers the trade to such an extent that the current year's profits are not unlikely to show a considerable reduction. Iron and steel companies have naturally benefited from the awakening of activity, while Nitrate shares have suffered severely, in spite of the formation of a new combination to restrict the output; for not only has the death of Colonel North removed the guiding spirit of the industry, but the unfavourable condition of agriculture has affected in no small degree the demand for the companies' product. It is impossible to leave this section of our review without referring to the great number of new companies not included in the foregoing groups that have been brought before the public. We have already alluded to the prominent part taken by Mr. Hooley in these matters, and the mere mention of his name will, no doubt, remind our readers of the famous Bovril deal, which has been one of the most sensational developments in the Industrial Market in the year that is just drawing to a close.

Thursday, Dec. 24, 1896.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

All letters on financial subjects to be addressed to the "City Editor, 'The Sketch' Office, Granville House, Arundel Street, Strand."

Our Correspondence Rules are published on the first Wednesday in each month.

A MAIDEN ALL FORLORN.—Our information is that Deccan shares on merits ought to go better. The colliery profits for 1896 will amount to at least £100,000, and if the gold properties turn out well, the price of the shares should certainly improve. You can't lose much by buying, and you may make a good profit.

H. R. S.—We should not have chosen the investment, but the interest each half-year is safe enough. We hear the company was very badly subscribed. "Cumulative" means that, if the profits of any half-year are not enough to provide the 5 per cent. dividend, the shortage must be made up and paid before the ordinary shares can get anything.

SALISBURY.—We advise you to hold Nos. 1, 3, 5, and 9; as to the others the prices are so low that it seems folly to sell, but except No. 8, we have little hope of any improvement on real merits. The people mentioned in question No. 10 are to be avoided. If you look at the Correspondence column of our issue of Dec. 9 you will see why.

J. F. B.—We know nothing so cheap and likely to improve as Pearson's 5½ per cent. preference shares, which have just got an official quotation, or *Lady's Pictorial and Sporting and Dramatic Publishing Company* 5 per cent. preference shares. Nobel's Dynamite and Elswick Cycle shares are both good to buy.

BEE-BÉE.—We never answer anonymous letters, but see last answer.

PERPLEXED.—Until the company acknowledge that you have paid the call, we advise you not to part with the receipt. If you have the certificate for the shares fully paid, as you say, you may sit down and leave the company to rage. Send the receipt (if you insist on doing something) to a friend in London, and ask him to show it to the company's secretary, to put an end to the unpleasantness. As to the mine, we believe it to be a bad egg.

CYCLE.—Rover, Swift, and Elswick shares are all worth buying, in our opinion.

NOTE.—In consequence of Christmas, we are obliged to hold over all other answers until next week. We ask our correspondents' forgiveness, and trust they will not suffer inconvenience thereby.